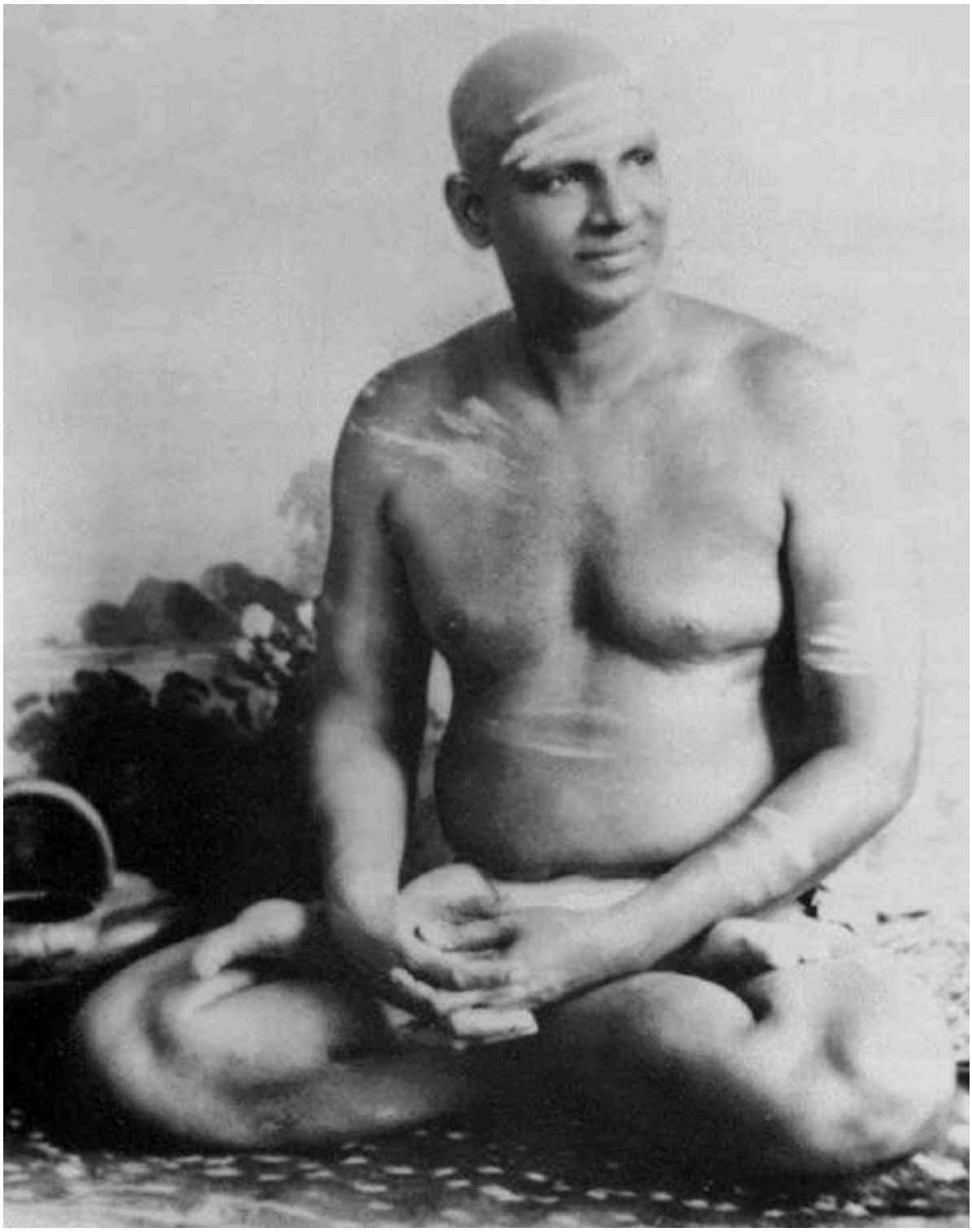

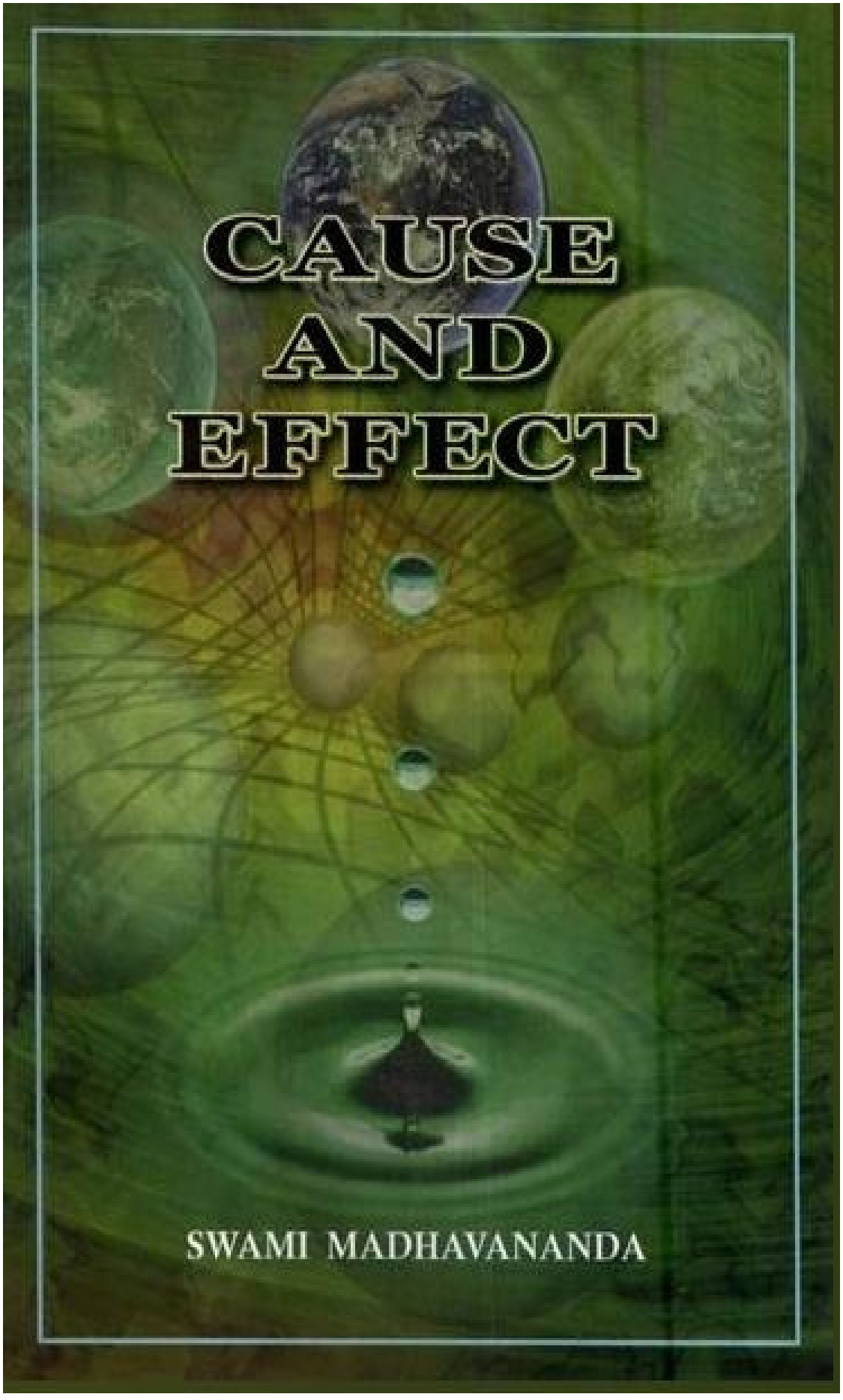
CAUSE
AND
EFFECT
SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

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SRI SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, one of the direct disciples of worshipful Satgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, before ordained to Sannyas, was known by the name Sri Karunanidhi. Sri Karunanidhi was horn on December 15, 1917 in Burma (nosy Myanmar) where his father was working as a military officer. He never told anyone about his antecedents, and, therefore, much is not know about his pre-monastic life.

Sri Karunanidhi came to Sivananda Ashram in the year 1950 when worshipful Satgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj returned from his All-India Spiri-tual Awakening Tour from 8th September 1950 to 8th November 1950. When Gurudev reached Delhi, Sri Karunanidhi had also reached Delhi on his way to join the Sivananda Ashram. Ile had his first Darshan of his Master Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th November 1950. Gurudev immediately sized him up and spotted the potentiality in him.

Gurudev reposed complete faith in Sri Karunanidhi and appointed him as Cashier even before he became an ordained monk. With his calm, quiet and reticent nature, he managed the functions of Cashier very well. In a short time he earned the confidence of Satgurudev. Recognising his spiritual worth, Gurudev initiated him into Sannyas order, within a few months of his arrival. On the Mahasivaratri day, the 6th March, 1951, Sri Karunamdhi

became Sri Swami Madhavananda Saraswati Maharaj. Later on, Gumdev nominated and appointed hint as Secretary of The Divine Life Society Headquarters. In addition to several services he rendered to the Ashram, Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj on his own accord took upon himself the additional duty of supervising the construction works of the Ashram.

Sri Swamiji was a great Bhakta of Lord Krishna and was very regular in his worships and spiritual practices. His saintly personality and the holiness of his life has irresistibly evoked respect and reverence in the hearts of one and all who have had the privilege of meet-ing him and knowing hint. He was a man of few words, silence loving, dignified, unostentatious, simple in nature, yet marked by a certain seriousness and reverence.

Swami Madhavanandaji was elected as Treasurer of The Divine Life Society Headquarters in the year 1963. He became the Vice-President of The Divine Life Society in the year 1975. Swamiji attained Mahasamadhi on March 3, 2005.

INTRODUCTION

(To the First Edition)

I bow in reverence to this great Saint H.H. Swami Madhavanandaji to say a few words and in this attempt I cannot do full justice and even if I say anything it shall be like holding only 'a candle before the Sun'. To get a glimpse of his real spiritual personality; one has to refer to the 'Souvenir' about publication of his birth day (Shastyabdapurti) celebrations in which other holy Saints and Ashramites have paid glowing tributes of his self-effacing character and on his day to day holy practices as enjoined on him by Gurudev H.H. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj who is an eternal inspiration to him in this life. He is one of the chosen disciples and a great apostle of the great Saint H.H. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and highly venerated by all. He has imbibed all the spiritual ideals of Gurudev and to meet him and sit in Satsanga with him is like sitting before the Divinity itself! Sri Swamiji is serving the Divine Life Society in all his sincerity. He adores Gurudev and people adore him.

H.H. Sri Swami Madhavanandaji belongs to the World Spiritual Order spreading the gospel of Divine Love and Bhakti among people. He is considered to be the very embodiment of Bhakti and he maintains silence most of the time. He speaks but he speaks very little. But he has left a legacy of spiritual wisdom in his writings. Some of which

we discovered were not printed. I thank Dr. Arunaji, M.D. for helping in this endeavour. So we have printed them. Much of the works is already lost in obscurity. We were able to salvage a few of his articles and hence this publication as our humble homage to this great spiritual personality!

The publication has become possible because of the donations from the devotees and the personal help given by Sri A. Nageswara Rao, Saraswathi Power Press, and the scintillating Foreword, so kindly given by Smt. Vivecananda Devi. I think all of them most sincerely and from the bottom of my heart.

Smt. Sarojini Pandurang

President

DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY (Ladies' Branch)

HYDERABAD

FOREWORD

H.H. Swami Madhavanandaji's 'Cause and Effect' is like a bouquet of fragrant flowers of variety, whose sweet scent disperses great joy and happiness to one and all.

The great Guru Sri Adi Sankara is not only a spiritual, ethical and psychic illuminator, but is also a pathlayer for the realisation of oneness with God. He came down not to kill or uproot any demoniac forces or demons, but to enlighten the intellectuals and Jnanis.

The Mahabhinishkramana of Siddhartha is a masterpiece in the annals of history as well as an episode in the history of religion.

Taoism and Confucian ethics were discussed at length in this book for the benefit of the so-called rationalists and communists. But the author proves ultimately the uprooting of 2000 years of culture and ethics is not so easy as that. The mystery of life itself is very mysterious and intriguing. Though mankind's progress depends on physical, chemical and physiological factors, our will plays a dominant part in moulding our fortunes and progress. So we have to take care of the future generation for the younger children.

The force of thought is very powerful, if not powerful than a nuclear bomb. Thoughts effect the world for generations and generations to come. Unless one is selfless the power of thought shall not succeed. Saints and Sages are selfless

and they never work for themselves or for the benefit or for the fruits of their action. So they are equal to God.

World never changes, though it seems like ever changing. It is the time, space and causation that creates this illusion. The sage who indwells in his mind is beyond any change of form or name.

For the regeneration of India, faith and self-confidence in our future is needed. As Occidentalists and Advaitists we have to remember that the soul never dies or changes. Nothing can destroy it. By this attitude India once again can be rejuvenated.

The whole book is very enlightening and encouraging. It appeals both to intellectuals as well as rationalists. I am grateful to Smt. Sarojini Pandurang for giving me the opportunity of writing this small Foreword.

Om Tat Sat!

Smt. Vivecananda Devi

CAUSE

AND

EFFECT

SANKARA-THE FIRST GURU

OF KALI YUGA

Whereas the generality of Avataras is for the purpose of reestablishment of Dharma through and by means of the destruction of the wicked and the protection of the righteous and whereas this sort of Avataras take place several times in each Yuga according to the needs of humanity, yet there is another, a special kind of Avatara described in our scriptures as coming into being sometimes after the commencement of each Yuga, not for the destruction of this or that individual monster or set of monsters and so on, but as the first Jnana Guru for the Yuga; viz., for the sole purpose of giving spiritual, psychic and ethical illumination to the lives of that Yuga and setting before them the path, which will take them to their goal of happiness here, salvation hereafter, ultimate emancipation from all bondage and consequent eventual Realisation of their oneness with God.

DAKSHINAMURTI

Thus we are told that, in the first Yuga known in our scriptures as Satya Yuga or Krita yuga, the natural tendency of the great mass of sentient beings was (with of course the usual and invariable exception to the rule), one which impelled them to become 'Krita Krityas', viz., to fully and correctly perform the duties enjoined on them by the Sastras in respect of Karmas (actions), Upasana (Devotion

and worship) and Jnana (spiritual knowledge) in due and full accordance with the different Adhikaras which were theirs by virtue of their Varnas, Ashramas and so forth.

Hence the name Krita Yuga may be explained in terms of saying: 'Krita Krityanaam Yugam Krita Yugam.' For the various aspirants of those days on the ladder of spirituality used to perform all their respective functions in the three Kandas fully and correctly, and were therefore Krita Krityas (persons who had discharged all their duties). From this it naturally follows that in as much as the performance of Svadharma is the path of Chitta Shuddhi (Purification of heart) as laid down in the scriptures, in Sri Krishna's words in the Eighteenth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita:

Yajnadanatapahkarma na tyajyam karyameva tat,

Yajno danam tapaschaiva pavanani maneeshinam.

(Yajnas, Charities, Penances and other Karmas are purifiers of the heart; therefore they should not be neglected but should necessarily be performed) and so on, it is consequently obvious that persons of the type described must naturally be pure in heart.

And such, we find, was actually the case in respect of the great mass of the Jivas in the Krita Yuga. This type of Jivas is symbolised and illustrated before the world in the personalities and through the examples of Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujata and others.

In the next place, we note the Scriptures telling us that Chittasuddhi (Purity of heart) is the direct and immediate means for the attainment of Jnana (Divine illumination); and we similarly find Lord Jesus Christ saying: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." From this it follows that Sanaka and others of the Krita Yuga typify and represent the great order of the highly evolved souls who have become Krita Krityas, achieved Chittashuddhi and become Adhikaris for Atma Jnana (spiritual wisdom).

We, therefore, find that they are not called upon to undergo an elaborate process of instruction and training of questioning and their answers, of discussing things and having them expounded and so forth. They go for- ward by a stroke of inspiration to the Adi Jagadguru of Krita Yuga, namely Bhagavan Dakshinamurti with various questions in their hearts for which they seek answers. But lo and behold! They are astonished and gratified at experience that when they actually go and sit before Him, they find all their questions automatically answered within their own hearts and there is nothing further for them to ask Him and receive instruction and be enlightened.

It needs no elaborate and detailed exposition in optical physics to expound this fact of everyday experience, namely that if and when a mirror is not clean and pure or is a refractor, it does not produce correct reflections but only distorted images of the things before it, but if and

when a mirror is absolutely pure and accurate, it immediately and correctly reflects everything before it.

Exactly similar is the case with regard to the purity of the human heart and the lack of it. In other words if and when a heart is not Sattvic but is of a Rajasic or a Tamasic character, it comes under the operation of the Law of Nature explained by Lord Sri Krishna in in the Gita with the words: Sarvarthanvipareethamscha (it distorts all things and receives absolutely erroneous impression about them). But if and when a heart is absolutely pure, it acts as a correct reflecting mirror and automatically receives into itself a wholly right and accurate impression about the nature of God, the individual soul and the Universe. In short, it receives Divine Illumination.

Thus, when Sanaka and other disciples of Dakshinamurti merely go and sit before Him, their pure and untarnished hearts naturally play the part of good reflectors and automatically receive and reflect within themselves all the Jnana (Spiritual Light) enshrined within the heart and head of the Lord, who is sitting in utter silence before them. This is why our Scriptures say: He, the eternally youthful one, sits in silence, and, by His very silence, explains everything to them: and all doubts and questions vanish from their hearts. By His eloquent silence, He brings into their hearts the requisite Soul-illumination for which they have come to Him and so on. ("Gurosthu mounam vyakhyanam shisyasthu chinnasamsaya.")

Bhagavan Dakshinamurti is therefore the first Jnana Guru of the Golden age, viz., Satya Yuga, wherein the Jijnasu (the seeker after truth) has, (by his previous performance of Svadharma and his penances) destroyed all the impurities within his heart and thus goes before the Master with no obstacles (on his own side) on the path of Divine Knowledge. And the successive Jnana Gurus who follow Him in later ages of the same Krita Yuga and come from time to time in response to the needs and exigencies of the actual situation before them, merely carry on Bhagavan Dakshinamurti's work of en- lightening the world on more or less the same lines as have been explained.

BHAGAVAN DATTATREYA

In chronological order, we go on next into a very brief consideration of the Second Yuga, viz., the Treta Yuga wherein the average Adhikari is not a perfect Krita Kritya of the Sanaka type but as indicated by the word Treta itself a successful performer of Svadharma in only one of the three paths, namely Karma or Bhakti or Jnana. He, consequent to the Krita Yuga, does not possess Chittashuddhi (purity of heart) in the same manner and to the same extent, and cannot therefore act as a reflecting mirror, i.e., cannot become an easy recipient of the wisdom enshrined in the Master's head and heart.

In other words, he needs to be instructed, taught, disciplined and trained to receive it by following the path

of Svadharma and the resultant achievement of the requisite pre-qualification for Jnana, i.e., Chittasuddhi.

It is in the fitness of things therefore and in accordance with the requirements of the Adhikaris of the Treta Yuga that Bhagavan Dattatreya comes next into the story as the Adi Jagadguru during the Yuga and performs his functions accordingly. His disciples are not capable of searching for and spotting out the Master in His own place. He, therefore, goes in search of them, gives them the necessary instructions, impetus, and training and brings about their salvation. In fact, he is the first Paramahamsa Parivrajakacharya, peripatetic preacher and Teacher of humanity; and His disciples are Goraksha, Kartaviryarjuna and others. And His successors in Treta Yuga carry on His tradition for the benefit of the succeeding generations and thus contribute their quota for the uplift of the aspiring humanity.

BHAGAVAN VEDAVYASA

Then comes the third, viz., the Dvapara Yuga. Wherein the Lord is called upon to deal with a still lower type of Jivas and take the necessary steps for uplifting and elevating them. Not only are these lacking in the complete and complete and perfect Chittasuddhi of the Sanaka school but they do not even reach upto the level of the Treta Yuga wherein the disciple could receive, digest, absorb and assimilate the teachings obtained from the Master.

And, even on matters relating to cardinal and fundamental principles and procedure, they are assailed by doubts as to what exactly the Master had actually expounded, explained and enjoined on such and such momentous point of the utmost and most vital importance to them in their everyday practical life. In fact, the Sanskrit word Dvapara (by which the third Yuga has been named) means doubt; and this gives us a clue to the mentality of the average Jiva of the Dvapara Yuga.

This means, in effect, that owing to want of concentrative power and of retentiveness of memory on the part of the people, it is not sufficient for the Jagadguru (World Teacher) of the Dvapara Yuga to give His oral instructions to them but it is also necessary nay, indispensable that such instructions must be codified and put into writing and placed before the students in the shape of books so that, whenever a Dvapara (viz., a doubt) arises in his mind on any subject, he may have the necessary facility for immediately referring to his textbook, refreshing his memory therewith, correcting his errors of memory and keeping to right conceptions all round. We, therefore, find the Lord incarnating in the beginning of Dvapara Yuga as its Adi Jagadguru in the shape of books, (and not merely of oral instructions) the codified and the classified contents of the Vedas (whereby He receives the name Vedavyasa, i.e., the codifier and classifier of the Vedas), the Vedanta Sutras (analysing, synthesising and harmonising) the seemingly

conflicting teachings of the Upanishads; and putting them in in the form of Sutras or aphorisms in an easily remem berable form), the Puranas (which give the teachings of the Vedas and the Vedanta, etc.,) in a more elaborate and detailed manner for the benefit of those who are not intellectually equal to the task of digesting, assimilating and remembering the meanings, implications, denotations and connotations of the contents of the Vedas, the terse Vedanta aphorisms and so on. And Bhagavan Vedavyasa's successors in the Dvapara Yuga naturally carry on this method of instructing the pupils of the Dvapara Yuga.

We now come, at last, to a study of the chief characteristic of the fourth, viz., the Kali Yuga wherein our own lots have been cast. Here we may, in the very first place, note that, whereas even the word Dvapara merely meant doubt and nothing worse than that, the Sanskrit word 'Kali' on the contrary means something more positively injurious, namely, strife or quarrelling. In other words the average Kaliyuga Jiva is not assailed by any doubts regarding the exact teachings of the Scriptures and his Teacher (for that would at least mean, imply and involve a certain degree of humility on his part) but feels positively sure that his own intellect (unaided by experience, by study and by reflection) is sufficient for his purpose of dis-crediting them and asserting the rights of his own half-baked or utterly unbaked views of every subject conceivable in the universe (with the consequence that such a person naturally and

inevitably quarrels all the time with the injunctions of the scriptures and the Teachings of the Teachers of humanity and claims for himself the status and authority of the Highest court of appeal even on matters he has never studied even the rudiments of).

The necessity therefore inexpressibly arises, not for instructions of the type which were sufficient in the Dvapara Yuga but for Bhashyas (long detailed elaborate works of a highly controversial and dialectical character wherein all controverted matter are thrashed out at great lengths, all possible views of an opposite or even different school of thoughts, are thoroughly discussed and ignominiously defeated and the right doctrine is expounded at the end of it all by a lengthy process of a most scholarly character, calculated to silence all objectors and carry conviction to the most refractory intellect and resultant peace on the storm tossed soul.

The exigencies and requirements of the Kaliyuga, as just described, were thus responsible for the fact that Bhagavan Sri Sankara had to incarnate as the Adi Jnanaguru of the Kaliyuga in the person of Bhagavan Jagadguru Sri Adi Sankaracharya, enter into scholarly and erudite controversy with opponents of every conceivable type, defeat all of them by means of answerable arguments and irresistible dialects and reestablish the Sanatana Vaidika Dharma and the Vedanta Siddhanta as taught by the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras and the Bhagavad Gita. In

fact he had to and actually did on the strength and virtue of pure, sharp and solid intellect and argument-hold his own against all promulgators and propagators of wrong doctrines, defeat them at every step and on every point, kill out their obstinacy and force them into submission. Sometimes this even took the shape of physical attacks on his person; and thrice had his person to be saved from these (twice by his great disciple Sri Padmapadacharya) and once by the great king Sudhanwa and his invincible army.

In consequences of the afore described activities, Jagadguru Adi Sankaracharya was able to lay down all the united forces of Adharma and reestablish the Sanatana Vaidika Dharma; and, he was the first Jnanaguru or Yuga Guru of the Kali Yuga, the other Acharyas who succeeded him during last periods of the Kali Yuga have all (more or less) had to follow the same path, viz., of incessant controversial activities, meeting objections, convincing their opponents, defeating obdurate enemies and fighting incessantly for the propagation and the diffusion of the particular Siddhanta in question.

We thus find Sri Ramanujacharya, Sri Madhvacharya, Sri Vallabhacharya, Sri Nimbarkacharya and others carrying on propaganda by means of elaborate Bhashyas and other commentaries of polemical character calculated to refute all hostile arguments and carry conviction to the world at large. As Sri Sankaracharya was thus the first Acharya of the

series in Kali Yuga and as others followed him not only in points of time but also in the adoption of the same tactics and the same strategy of war (so to speak) with their religious and intellectual opponents, it is correct to state, that, both from the standpoint of mere historical or chronological order and of policy and procedure, he was the first Jnana Guru of the Kali Yuga.

And besides we may also take into account the undeniable fact of history that it was Bhagavan Sri Sankaracharya who had to shoulder the heaviest part and the whole brunt of the burden in pursuing all the multifarious opponents of the Sanatana Vaidika Dharma from corner to corner throughout the length and breadth of the land and defeating them not on this or that particular doctrine as aspects of Theology, Cosmogony, Meta- physics, psychology, ethics, Upasana, Karma, and so but in respect of the entire system and whole mass of material constituting the Sanatana Vaidika Dharma of the land.

And it was after he had thus achieved superb and signal success in the supreme task of reestablishing India's ancient Dharma that the other Acharyas came on the scene and tackled, in their turn and in due course, the problems of their times, bearing not on the defence of the Sanatana Dharma as a whole but merely this or that partic-ular aspect of the doctrine thereof. And this is why even those Sanatana Dharmis who are not believers of Bhagavan Sankara's system of Advaita, feel compelled to pay their

heart's homage to Sankara for the unique and incomparable benefits conferred by him on the world in general and on India in particular by his redemption, resuscitation and rejuvenation of Sanatana Dharma at the most critical juncture when it seemed to be practically on its deathbed and beyond all possibility of redemption. Herein lies the appropriateness of the fact that Bhagavan Sri Sankaracharya has been universally recognised as the great reviver of Sanatana Dharma and as the first Jnana Guru of the Kali Yuga; in the light of the vast mass of the historical descriptions and references thus available to us on the subject from all directions.

We ought also to remember in this connection the pregnant and incontrovertible fact that, if in spite of her present day all-round degraded condition in all other respects, India holds the most brilliant thinkers of the Western World captive still, it is Sri Sankaracharya's impregnable Advaita Siddhanta alone which the brightest intellects of the universe have thus been compelled to bow their heads reverentially down before India for his supremely astounding and otherwise inexplicable nay, incomprehensible historic phenomenon of this seemingly most miraculous character.

It was about 1300 years ago that Bhagavan Sri Sankaracharya incarnated on earth and brought illumination to the ignorant minds in Kali Yuga (the present Iron Age) as their Jnana Guru, elucidated to them the correct

meaning of the Upanishads, the Gita, the Brahmasutras, etc., in many monumental Bhashyas thereon and left behind Him for the benefit of the humanity, a beacon fire of divine wisdom which burns with undi- minished brilliancy even to the present day and which even Carlyle, Emerson, Deusen, Mackenzy and other great philosophers of the Western World, too, proudly point to, as the source of inspiration which they have de- rived for their own philosophical ideas and ideology from.

It is also interesting to note that in Bhagavan Sri Sankaracharya's four great disciples are typified and symbolised the four great intellectual attitudes or mentalities which must necessarily characterise pupil psychology.

In the first place there is the kind of student who by his Karmas and Siddhis of past births or of the present one or of both, is a Krita Kritya and is a Janma Siddha, i.e., fit from birth itself for formally receiving the necessary initiation from the Guru as enjoined by the Shastras. This type of Siddha from birth is of course, very rare but does actually exist and is typified by Sri Hastamalakacharya. The second type of pupil is the one who, by dint of implicit obedience, perfect receptivity assimilates them; and Sri Padmapadacharya typifies this type.

Third in order comes the kind of pupil whose vision has been distorted and whose judgment has been worked not

by any fault of his own but by the unfortunate fact of his having previously received and absorbed incorrect knowledge from others but is all the same a sincere Jignasu (a seeker after the Truth) and therefore, after fighting hard in defence of his own view sees the wrong- ness in it and cannot but recognise and bow down to the Truth when he comes to know of it. And this type of disciple is typified by Sri Sureshwaracharya who, as the great scholar Mandana Mishra, fought a terrible polemical and dialectical fight with Bhagavan Sri Sankara in defence of the Purva Mimamsa doctrine but, being convinced by the overwhelming force of the Scriptural authorities cited the latter's Vedanta doctrine, took Sannyasa from Him and afterwards became one of the greatest commentators and apostles.

The fourth type of pupil is one who, being neither a Janma Siddha like Sri Hastamalakacharya nor of the intellectual caliber and scholarly attainments of Sri Padmapadacharya or Sri Sureswaracharya, devotes himself in all humility and in a spirit of service to the Master's lotus feet, earns His love and grace and thereby attains wisdom and Moksha; and this type is typified by Sri Totakacharya.

From these features and characteristics of the four great disciples of Bhagavan Sri Sankara, there is a lesson of very instructive nature which every Sadhaka will stand to gain, namely, that although all of us cannot be Janma Siddhas like Sri Hastamalakacharya, yet we can, at any rate, attach

ourselves to the Master and like Sri Padmapadacharya, live lives of obedience and assiduous study, leading us step by step to the fulfilment of our lives' purpose. And if perchance, we have not the good fortune, like Sri Padmapadacharya, to get into contact at the very outset with a great and real Guru like Sri Sankaracharya and have on the contrary-been so un- fortunate as to have imbibed wrong notions and emulated incorrect doctrines from others to start with, we can even then, at any rate, have the sincere and earnest Spirit of Inquiry which inspired Sri Mandana Mishra (afterwards Sri Sureshwaracharya) and, on coming into contact with the Truth, recognise it and accept it as he did. In case, however we have neither Sri Hastamalakacharya's Siddhi from our very birth nor even the intellectual calibre and other qualifications which characterised Sri Padmapadacharya and Sri Sureswaracharya, we all certainly can and should at any rate, follow in the footsteps of Sri Totakacharya, attach ourselves in simple faith and obedient service to the Master's feet and thereby climb in our own way and in God's own good time, the ladder leading us to the Master's own loving Grace ineffable and there-through of Salvation. We need hardly say that the earnest pupil and seeker after Emancipation must necessarily tread one or another of the four paths mentioned and there is no fifth path left.

Such as we have described above was Bhagavan Sri Sankara and such the nature, the extent, the quality and the far-

reaching nay, everlasting-results of His activities on Earth. It therefore behove us all-as thinking human beings in general and India's children in particular to keep in mind the facts, the principles and the les- sons hereinfore indicated in connection with Sri Sankara's life and doings with a deep and abiding sense of overflow- ing gratitude in our hearts for the enormous, invaluable and eternal benefits conferred by Him on all humanity and with a resolute vow that, as far as lies in our powers (physical, mental, intellectual, psychic, spiritual and so forth), we shall exert ourselves to the utmost to study His teachings, assimilate them and make them, as far as humanly possible, the working principle of our daily life from moment to moment. Let us offer our heart-felt and fervent prayers to Him, the Adi Jagad Guru of Kali Yuga and consequently the great Master of us all.

Hari Om Tat Sat.

Sri Jagadguru Paramatmane Namah.

THE GREAT RENUNCIATION

'It is sublime in the beginning. It is sublime in the middle. It is sublime at the end.' These words in which the Buddha described the essence of his teachings to Ananda, are equally apt with reference to his own life. Every phase of the Tathagata's life moves us by its beauty and its unsullied purity. Queen Maya's dream, the birth of Siddhartha in the garden of Lumbini; his education and attainments; his marriage to Yasodhara and the birth of Rahul; the witnessing of the four signs by Gautama and his departure from Kapilavastu; his struggle against Mara and his attainment of supreme enlightenment; the turning of the wheel of the Law; the conversion of Sariputta and Moggallana; the Sakhyamuni's life at Sravasti and Vaishali; the Great Deliverance at Kushinara-each episode has a significance of its own and fuses with the others to form an aesthetic whole.

And yet, while every part of the Buddha's career is meaningful, the events connected with his departure from Kapilavastu have a particularly deep impact upon us. The Mahabhinishkramana does not bring us face to face with the spectacular struggle against Mara; but it reveals an inner conflict and the anguish of a sensitive soul in the face of disillusionment. The Mahabhinishkramana has been translated as the Great Departure, the Great Renunciation or the Great Going Forth into the state of the Homeless-ness. All the phrases in spite of their differences of

emphasis, point to the momentous decision taken by the future Buddha after a period of intense restlessness. Although there is an abundance of the supernatural even in the part of his legendary life, the stress is on the essentially human aspect of his personality. That is why the theme has had so much appeal to poets and artists of all ages. Siddhartha's conviction of the transitoriness of all things earthly, his si- lent farewell to his wife and son, the devotion of Channa the charioteer, and the fatal grief of Kanthaka, Gautama's favourite horse, have called forth many masterpieces of sculpture and paintings.

A number of Buddhist texts, both Pali and Sanskrit, deal with the great renunciation. There are for example, the Mahavatsu of the Lokottaravadins or the Mahasangikas and the Lalitavistara of the Sarvastivadins. The latter which is in mixed Sanskrit, contains a detailed account-largely legendary of the events connected with the Renunciation. It was on the Lalitavistara that Sir Edwin Arnold based his famous poem 'The Light of Asia'. The Nidhankatha is in pure Pali and forms the introductory part of the Jatakas. It embodies the most ancient traditions concerning the early years of the Buddha's life. Another interesting biographical account of the Abhishkramana Sutra is translated by Samuel Beal under the title: 'The Romantic Legend of Sakhya Buddha'.

Let us follow the sequence of the episodes leading to the Great Renunciation, as told in the Nidhankatha. The gods,

perceiving that the time of Siddhartha's enlightenment was approaching, had shown him the four signs. The prince had gone in to the Royal Park in his richly adorned chariot and, on four successive days, he had gazed upon an old man, a sick man, a corpse and a yellow-robed monk who had retired from the householder's life. A deep discontentment had gripped him. Meanwhile, Princess Yasodhara had given birth to a son and, since the prince had remarked that an impediment had come into being the child was named Rahul, meaning 'a fetter'.

King Suddhodana had decreed that no effort should be spared to divert the melancholy prince and keep his mind away from sad thoughts. One day, as Gautama returned to his palace and lay down on his splendid couch, beautiful women came to him as usual and sang and danced before him. After a while, seeing that he did not even look at them, they reclined and fell asleep. In the middle of the night the prince woke up, sat cross-legged on the couch and glanced at the women lying on the soft carpets. Some were muttering to them- selves, others were snoring, still others gaped with a vacant look. Some were grinding their teeth, others had dishevelled hairs and their dress was in disorder. Seeing these women, who but a little earlier appeared enchanting like the Apsaras of Indra's paradise, the prince exclaimed: 'How oppressive!' 'How stifling!' I must go forth on the Great Retirement this very day.

His mind made up, Siddhartha called Channa, the charioteer, and ordered him to saddle a horse. Channa selected the fine stallion Kanthaka, and drew the girth around him. 'When I am saddled for a ride in the Park', thought Kanthaka, 'the girth is never drawn, so tight as it is tonight. Assuredly my master is preparing for the Great Renunciation.' And as he thought thus, he neighed loudly in delight; but the gods smothered the sound and no one awoke.

After he had sent Channa on his errand, the future Buddha said to himself, 'I shall have just one look at my son'. He rose from his couch and entered Yasodhara's apartment and saw her sleeping on a bed strewn with jasmines, her hand resting on Rahul's head. 'If I raise my wife's hand to take the child in my arms', thought Siddhartha, 'she will wake up and prevent the Great Retirement. I shall first attain Buddhahood and then come back to see my son.'

And then he descended from the palace and approached Kanthaka. 'Good Kanthaka', he said, 'stand by me but this one night, and I shall redeem you for all time to come.' With these words he gently mounted the steed, and, with Channa holding the tail, proceeded towards the city-gate. And as Kanthaka entered, the gods once again muffled the sound by placing at each step, the palms of their hands under the horse's hoofs. They also noiselessly opened the stupendous gate; and the two thousand guardsmen placed

there by the king's orders knew nothing of Siddhartha's departure.

And now Mara, the Evil One, appeared in the air and coaxed: 'Do not go forth, Siddhartha, do not go forth. In seven days from now the miraculous treasure-wheel will appear. It will make you master of the four continents and the two thousand adjacent islands.' But Siddhartha recognised the temper. 'You are Mara', he said, 'and I know your purpose. I seek no sovereignty over the continents. I shall attain Buddhahood and make ten thousand world-systems shout for joy.' Mara was disappointed. But he said to himself: 'I shall catch him yet. Let one little trace of malice or anger appear within Siddhartha's mind and I shall drag him down.'

As the future Buddha proceeded, he felt a longing to look back and gaze upon the city of Kapilavasthu. But the earth revolved like a potter's wheel and he could look upon the city he had left behind without turning his head. On his way the Devas lit sixty-thousand torches in front of him, behind him, and to his right and left. Superhuman beings kept his company, doing him homage and scattering perfume all round. Kanthaka had to break his way through a deluge of blossoms and a cloud of sandal dust. And di- vine melodies filled the air.

Passing beyond the three kingdoms Gautama reached the bank of the river Anoma which was six-hundred yards in

breadth. The prince signalled to his horse and Kanthaka jumped over it in a single leap. Siddhartha dismounted, stood on the silvery bank and said to his charioteer: 'Good Channa, here I leave the householder's world. Take these jewels, take my horse and return to Kapilavastu.'

Then he thought to himself: 'These well-groomed locks of mine are unsuitable for a recluse. And yet it is not right anyone else should cut the hair of a future Buddha. I shall cut it off myself with this sword.' So he held in his left hand the plaited tresses, together with the priceless diadem, and cut it with his sword. He threw the tuft of hair into the air and said: 'If I am to become a Buddha, let it stand in the air, if not let it fall to the ground.' The plaited hair and the jeweled diadem soared into the sky for a league and there Indra caught it in diamond casket.

Again Siddhartha thought to himself: "This dress of silk and muslin does not behove a recluse." And Brahma Gatikara, his friend in an earlier incarnation, read his thought. He provided Siddhartha with the great requisites of a hermit's life-three robes, an alms-bowl, a razor, a needle, a girdle and a water strainer. The prince took these and adopted the sacred garb of renunciation. He asked Channa to go back and assure his parents of his safety. As the charioteer was about to depart, Kanthaka overhearing his master's word, was stricken with grief. Unable to bear the thought that he would never see his master any more, his heart

burst suddenly and he died. And Channa returned to the city weeping and bewailing.

The Bodhisattva, full of joy of Renunciation, went forth to achieve the greater joy of Enlightenment.

Such is the great theme of Siddhartha's retirement as narrated in the Pali scripture. Taking his cue from this source, combining with anecdotes and ballads that had survived in oral tradition, and synthesising the entire material with matchless literary skill, Asvaghosha created his great poem, the Buddhacharita. The story of Buddha's renunciation has been sung by poets of every age, but never with such profound effect as Asvaghosha achieved.

Asvaghosha belongs not only to the history of Buddhist thought and culture but also to the great tradi- tion of Sanskrit poetry. He is regarded as an eminent successor to Valmiki, and his influence on Kalidasa and Bhasa is not generally recognised. Though he belonged to the Sarvastivadin school, and was thus a representative of early Buddhism, his work is the first expression of the Mahayana spirit which inspired the noblest and highest products of Buddhist culture. By his emphasis on Buddhabhakti, he introduced a personal note in the Buddhist writing, and lent warmth to the cold rationalism of the Master's immediate followers.

Besides the Buddhacharita, Asvaghosha wrote Sariputtaprakarana and Saundarananda-Kavya. A number

of Buddhist plays discovered at Turfan in Central Asia, have also been ascribed to them. But none of the other works is comparable to the Buddhacharita, with its rare combination of intensity and restraint, of stylistic beauty and imaginative richness. In handling the episodes connected with the great renunciation, Asvaghosha reaches the height of artistry. His touch is equally sure whatever the shade of feeling he depicts-suspense,

Anxiety, love, pathos, heroic resignation. Coomaraswamy says: 'He has the sage-teller's power of calling up a vivid picture in a few words. He understands the heavy toil of the peasant and the pure dignity of unsophisticated girlhood.'

While there is plenty of room for the supernatural in the Buddha Charita, the emphasis is on the human aspect of the Buddha legend. All the characters are treated with equal sympathy. Even the Brahmin votaries, to dissuade Siddhartha from renouncing the world argue convincingly. They appeal to the prince to take pity on his parents and remind him of his social obligations. They assert with much force that religion can be practised even in the city and that the Good Life stands in no need of mendicant's staff.

Siddhartha answers all arguments, moral, and metaphysical, with dignity and earnestness. 'What wise man would go by another's belief? I must determine the truth for myself. May the sun fall to earth, may the lofty

Himalayas lose its firmness. I shall never return home until I have attained supreme knowledge.'

In Ashvaghosha's account, Yasodhara does not emerge as a weak, helpless Indian wife, silently enduring what falls on to her lot. She protests strongly against her husband's decision to leave hearth and home. "He goes forth in the name of religion, and yet he abandons his wife.

Where indeed is his religion? Has he not heard of mighty monarchs of ancient times-his own forefathers among them who went into the forest after fulfilling their earthly tasks and took their wives along with them? He forgets that husband and wife are alike consecrated by holy sacrifices and their companionship is sanctified by Vedic rites.

In Buddha Charita a number of pre-renunciation episodes are introduced which are not present in the cultural accounts. They have enabled the poet to show his great powers of description and his ability to call up vivid visual images. Here is an example: Lured by his love for the peaceful forest the prince one day repaired to the outskirts of the city. He saw a plot of land being ploughed and made ready for seed. The paths broken by the plough looked like waves on the surface of the river. Siddhartha looked at the men as they toiled. He saw their faces soiled by the dust, scorched by the sun and chafed by the wind. He saw the oxen, wearied and dazed by their burden. And as he looked upon the spectacle, the All Noble One felt the utmost com-

passion. Descending from the horse he slowly paced the earth and was overcome with sorrow. He pondered long over the birth and destruction that proceeds in the world. He grieved and exclaimed: 'O, this is pitiful indeed.' Then he separated himself from his followers and reclined under a rose-apple tree in a solitary spot. There on the leafy ground, with the emerald grass around him and the leaves above him, a tremble in the breeze, he meditated upon the origin and vanishing of worldly things.

The discriminating visitor to Ajanta cannot help being surprised that none of the panels is devoted to this great theme of the Mahabhinishkramana. It must be re-membered, however, that many of the murals have never been identified and have perished for all times. It can hardly be doubted that there must have been a representation of the subject in one of the Ajanta caves in ancient times. It is at least a reasonable conjecture, considering that the Vassantar and the Saddanta Jatakas have been taken up and a number of incidents from the Buddha's early life depicted in detail.

In modern times many painters have dealt with the subject. On the walls of the Mulaghandhakutivihara, at Sarnath, a Japanese artist has depicted the story of the Buddha's life in a series of beautiful panels. Of these the Great Renunciation sequence is easily the best. Nandalal Bose has devoted one of his finest Buddha pictures to the Great Retirement. The colours are soft and subdued, in keeping

with the nocturnal atmosphere. The prince wears a moustache and ear-pendants. He is simply attired, but his locks are elegantly plaited and crowned with a diadem. Celestial beings support Kanthaka's hoofs and vegetation outside the palace is suggested by a few blades of grass. The picture is beautifully composed, the substantial palace column balancing the diagonal arrangement of the curves.

In scripture, the Great Renunciation is the subject of some of the most outstanding reliefs at Sanchi and Amaravati. On the northern Gateway at Sanchi, the lower architrave of the middle panel depicts the Vassantara Jataka. Prince Vassantara is banished by his own people for giving away his auspicious white elephant to a neighbouring country. He has to leave his home, and his departure foreshadows the Great Renunciation in his final incarnation. The Vassantara panel thus psychologically prepares us for the Mahabhinishkramana scenes on the eastern and southern gateways. The middle architrave of the eastern gateway is devoted to detailed representation of the Great Renunciation. On the southern gateway, the theme is taken up on the end-beams of the upper architrave. We see Kanthaka attended Channa; but in accordance with early Buddhist traditions, Siddhartha himself does not appear in the panel. Divinities of the air hover about above the mount. A regal parasol and a fly-wisp indicate the Bhodhisattva's presence in the saddle.

At Amaravati, the Great Renunciation sequence has been represented in two different styles. In one of the reliefs a series of incidents are related successively. The youthful prince appears in person. He abandons the Royal palace, mounts his steed and departs. The guardian deity of the town silently unlocks the gate. Celestial beings watch the Great Renunciation from mid-air and divinities of the earth support Kanthaka's hoofs to silence the clatter.

Side by side with this, the sculptors of Amaravati have also left a wonderful narration of the Great Renunciation in the earlier tradition. Here the Buddha-figure is not represented directly. A riderless horse is shown moving at a lively pace. Above the invisible Bhodhisattva the royal umbrella is carried by an attendant. The Yakshas and the Devas continue the sense of movement that the horse imparts to the entire relief. The work is so delicate, and the figures so nimble, that Zimmer compare it to a scene from some lovely Oriental dance.

Wherever the Buddha legend travelled, and it travelled to every region of the East-the Great Renunciation motif was taken up by countless poets, artists and musicians. In Chinese, Japanese and Burmese, choral hymns were composed on the subject and often incorporated in Ballet sequences. Painters took up the subject not only on big canvases but also on small objects such as fans, curtains and bowls.

At Borobudur, although the entire episode is not depicted in a single relief, particular incidents immediately before the Renunciation are portrayed. One of these is the scene in which lovely women divert prince Siddhartha with song and dance. According to Lalitavistara, the gods in order to hasten the Bhodhisattva's renunciation, altered the spectacle and made the women appear loathsome in his eyes. In the Borobudur panel, however, the artist has only shown, the grace and youthful charm of reclining women. But per- haps the most interesting example of Renunciation motif in sculpture to be seen anywhere outside India is in Burma. The Ananda temple at Pagan is comparatively small monument, and yet from the aesthetic point of view it offers much that is superior to the sculptures of Borobudur. Here the severing of the hairtuft has been depicted with great effect. As one of the final scenes in the renunciation drama, the incident is an important one. The Jatakas describe the scene: 'His hair he cut-so sweet with many pleasant smells, this chief of men, and high impelled it to the sky. And there god Vasava, the god with a thousand in eyes, golden casket caught it, bowing low his head.'

In the Pagan sculpture this incident is depicted through a series of independent pieces, beautifully harmonised together. The future Buddha is shown, first holding his locks in his left hand and next, having cut it off, throwing it up into the air. Above him are two figures to the left is Indra

soaring towards Heaven of Thirty-three gods, and to the right is Indrani watching in amazement. Below the Bhodhisattva are Channa and Kanthaka. Very few aspects of Buddhas are so touchingly beautiful as the figure of the devoted horse in this sequence. The despair and dejection of this noble animal have been brought out in the protesting attitude of the up- lifted foreleg and the expressive gesture of his bent head.

And when we reflect upon the legend of the Buddha, we cannot help sharing the feelings of the Burmese sculptor who attached so much importance to the figure of the horse. The Great Renunciation has meant many things to many millions through the centuries; but its most immediate impact was felt by none as deeply as the horse who conveyed the prince beyond the walls of Kapilavastu. To Kanthaka it was the end of all the earthly purpose and the ascent into the state of liberation.

Hari Om Tat Sat.

NEW AGE-NEW PROPHET

Great religious souls are born for reinstating the religion. With the passing of the time the vitality of a religious movement is lost because of unworthy life of the followers. Then comes the time for the advent of another great teacher. In accordance with the needs of the time, he preaches the highest ideas and spiritual discipline to realise them. All great teachers are right for all of them promulgate their views ordered by God Himself. This is possible because through mystic realisation they are attuned to Him and He becomes real to them. But then why is there so much difference in their views? To this it may be pointed out that difference is apparent and not real. It is mainly the difference of emphasis and not content of the goal.

Sri Krishna came and prescribed unselfish work as a major means of realisation. But with the passage of time people forgot the goal and began to work without any purposiveness. As a result the work became meaningless from the spiritual standpoint, because for religious growth it is not only religious action that is necessary, it is religious thinking that is more essential. Then came Buddha. He saw the futility of action with- out thought and hence rejected it. This created a stir and saved men from callousness to higher moorings.

As time passed people began to speak of Nirvana, but for all practical purposes made compromise with the world. But God and desire cannot co-exist. God and mammon cannot remain together. It is the purpose of religion to free human mind from the meshes of Maya. It must save man from his identification with the body. It must make him realise that he is not the body, not the mind, nothing material, but he is something non-material, he is spirit, he is divine. A man must attune his mind to God and then only will he be rid of the tentacles of Maya. To take man's mind to God, worshipful action is as much necessary as thinking. So arose Kumarila Bhatta with his protest against Buddhist philosophies. He preached the supremacy of Vedic ritual. His purpose was to free human mind from the thraldom of mere talk and lead on to practice. Most men require some practical application of the basic ideas, through which only they can appreciate the latter. Kumarila supplied a method that satisfied the organic craving for action. It is true that action bereft of thought is spiritually fruitless, but it is also true that action is the portal of deepest thought. Moreover a discipline acquires spiritual validity and potency through the power of a great religious soul. If man sincerely follows his words, surely there will be result. But variety is the spice of life. The human nature is such that it is never satisfied with one type of life. The very fact of uniformity makes it insipid. So the thinking section of the people were not satisfied with Kumarila's glorification of Achara, Karma and

the next world. Then came Sankara. He preached the Vedantic path of Knowledge primarily for the intellectuals and the Varnashrama-dharma or scriptural conduct according to stations of life for all. As a result the social chaos and the nihilistic ideas of degenerate Buddhism were wiped out.

To perform rites strictly according to the Vedic in- junction or to practise discipline of Knowledge is rather difficult for most men. So religion remained the guiding factor of life in the case of a few highly intellectual or active men only, the vast masses of men went outside its pale. So again the chaos began; people to talk of high philosophy and not do it. At that time it was Ramanuja who came and preached a system of devotion combining of course with knowledge and action. It became the religion of the common people henceforward. After him different religious teachers promulgated different systems of worship based on his idea of devotion to God. Ramanuja thus is the first teacher who laid almost exclusive stress on Bhakti, which satisfied the requirements of common man and thus became the pattern of religious life.

The philosophical view of Sri Ramanuja is Vishishtadvaita. It is Advaita with oneness or manifoldness of Brahman including Chit and Achit, i.e., conscious and unconscious beings which are in gross form during creation and in subtle form during dissolution. Brahman is the supreme Reality having as its body or attribute the individual souls and the

universe. Philosophically speaking, Ramanuja's view is a form of theism where God is taken as a person. The Supreme Truth according to Ramanuja is Narayana who is pointed out by the word Brahma, which means great. Ramanuja preached that God is All-Merciful, All-Pervading and repository of all good qualities. By His inscrutable power of omnipotence God creates, sustains and dissolves the world. All living beings are His parts. Because of sinful actions the Jivas have forgotten their real nature and cannot know God. If they worship God with devotion, they will be able to know their real nature and the nature of God and the mutual relation of the server and the served. By pleasing God through worship they can be free from the effects of Karma and attain direct vision through His grace. This is the goal of life. As a result they will no more have birth and death. They will be freed from Avidya and eternally live in bliss with Narayana, being not identified with but similar to Him. This is Moksha or release. All people are entitled to it. This liberation however must be sought through proper discipline.

What is the method of discipline or Sadhana propagated by Ramanuja for attaining the vision of God and for annihilating the fears inherent in the ungodly life? Broadly speaking, Ramanuja upheld the Varnashrama-dharma, doing duties with devotion ac- cording to the spiritual stations of life following the scriptures. His special stress is however on Bhakti, me- thodical and intense. Through

intense devotion, a votary sacrifices his all to God and becomes fearless. Devotion in intense form is the path of surrender to the will of God.

According to Ramanuja spiritual knowledge consists of five elements-knowing one's own nature, nature of God, the goal, the means and the obstacles. Karma or work or active virtue consists of sacrifices, gifts, austerities, prayers, the five great sacrifices, oblations to fire, pilgrimage, living in holy places, fasts, etc. Work is ancillary or complementary to knowledge. Jnana or knowledge consists of the knowledge of the soul and God by the study of scriptures and by actual experience. It includes Raja Yoga and is ancillary to Bhakti. Swami Vivekananda gives a broad definition of Bhakti including different grades of it. He says, "Bhakti is a series of succession of mental efforts at religious realisation beginning with ordinary and ending in a supreme intensity of love for Isvara." Bhakti or love of God according to Ramanuja is incessant loving meditation on God in His essence, attributes, symbols of power, grace and images. Meditation may be concrete (Salambana) or abstract (Niralambana). Meditation according to him is a constant remembrance of thing meditated upon flowing like an unbroken stream of oil poured out from one vessel to another. The above kind of remembering is as good as seeing. That worship of constant remembering is corroborated by the essential text of scriptures. So constant remembrance is Bhakti, and this remembering

which is as good as seeing is the means of liberation and is designated as Para-bhakti.

In Vedanta-samgraha Ramanuja distinguishes be- tween Sadhanabhakti and Para-bhakti. The first one consists of the purifying virtues. Para-bhakti is a process consisting of knowledge, taking the form of meditation which develops into perceptual vividness and concrete- ness which ultimately becomes one with the absorbing devotion to God. When Sadhana develops to this perfection, the Supreme reveals itself, that revelation, if lasting, is Mukti itself. If it is momentary, it adds to the intensity of love that is called Paramabhakti.

HELPS TO BHAKTI

For spiritual quest several qualities are necessary. As, for example, in the last verse of the Vedanta- samgraha it is mentioned that the book is addressed to those who are gifted with discriminative insight into what is essential, who are endowed with breadth of vision and openness of mind and who are solely guided by Pramanas.

The path of devotion, which is firm and fixed remembrance of God includes other factors also. In his commentary on the Vedanta Sutras, Ramanuja speaks of the seven helps to Bhakti. They are Viveka, Vimukha, Abhyasa, Kriya, Kalyana, Anavasada and Anudharsha. Prapatti is an independent Sadhana or not a Sadhana at all. (I) Viveka is discrimination. It is necessary to find out the means of purification of one's

food, which goes to build the body and mind-stuff. Swami Vivekananda discusses this point in his Bhakti-Yoga and concludes that 'it stands to reason that discrimination in the choice of food is necessary for the attainment of this higher state of mental composition which cannot be easily attained other- wise.' But the extravagant, meaningless fanaticism regarding food, is a peculiar sort of pure and simple materialism. (2) Vimukha is controlling the passions, detach- ment to objects of desire and longing for God. (3) Abhyasa or practice is repeatedly concentrating the mind on God. The above two helps are tersely mentioned in a Sloka in the Gita: 'By practice, O son of Kunti, and by non-attach- ment is it attained.' (4) Kriya is scriptural work according to one's capacity. It consists in practising the five Mahayajnas which are scriptural study, worship of the deities, duties to forefathers and to human beings and animal kingdom. (5) Kalyana is wishing well to all and doing good to them. It is attainable through purity. It consists of truthfulness, simplicity, compassion or doing good to others without any gain to oneself, charity, non-violence or not-injuring others by thought, word or deed, not coveting others' goods and not thinking vain thoughts over injuries received from another. Purity is absolutely the basic work, the bedrock upon which the whole Bhakti-building rests, as Swami Vivekananda puts it and he adds 'We must always remember that external practices have values only as helps to develop internal purity. The forms have value only so far

as they are expressions of the life within. (6) Anavasada is cheerfulness and hope. It gives enthusiasm and strength. (7) Anudharsha is the absence of exultation and is a mean between the two extremes of excessive joy and absence of joy. Too much mirth also should be avoided. Excessive mirth makes us unfit for serious thought. It also fritters away the energies of the mind in vain. The stronger the will the less the yielding to the sway of the emotions. Excessive hilarity is quite as objection- able as too much of sad seriousness and all religious reali- sation is possible only when the mind is in a steady peaceful condition of harmonious equilibrium.

SELF-SURRENDER

Prapatti or Sharanagati or surrender to the supreme is the best of all Sadhana. In his introduction to the seventh chapter of the Gita, Ramanuja says that it teaches the resignation of one's self to Him in firm faith (Prapatti) so as to be able to tear the veil of matter. The Vishistadvaitic stress on self-surrender is based on the three Mantras which are the key of spiritual life. If the Mulamantra explains the theory of Saranagati and the Dvamantra elaborates it, and shows also how it is to be practised. The Krama Sloka explicitly prescribes Saranagati as the means to be adopted by the Mumukshu incapable of Bhakti Yoga or as the response to divine grace and expressly promises him from all the accumulated sins that prevent his

enjoyments of the birthright of absolute service to the Lord in Parama Pada.

Prapatti is complete resignation to God. Six factors are distinguished to Prapatti: 1. acquisition of qualities which would make one a fit offering to God, 2. avoid- ance of conduct not acceptable to God, 3. faith that God would protect him, 4. appeal for protection, 5. a feeling of one's littleness and, 6. absolute self-surrender. The last is sometimes called the angina of which the other five are angas or parts.

Again Prapatti involves three elements namely, firm conviction that one belongs essentially to God (Svarupa-samarpana), the firm dedication of the fruits of one's endeavour to God (Phala-samarpana) and the trans- fer of one's responsibility in the matter of spiritual progress to the Supreme (Bhara-samarpana). It implies the definite surrender of the sense of being the 'doer' and the offering of the doership to God. Complete resignation to God makes a devotee fearless and assured salvation, for he does not depend on his limited resources but on the infinite resources of God. There are two kinds of surrender. In the first one surrender is taken recourse to for perfection of Bhakti. Here it is considered as an indirect means. The second type accepts surrender as a direct means when a devo- tee intensely feels his incompetence and is impatient of any delay of the vision of the Lord. It is not that Bhaki is discarded as such but Bhakti as a Sadhana is given up. The

vision of God is not an achievement. It is a gift of God. Moreover nothing by way of human effort is a direct and self-sufficing means to the attainment of the vision of God. This is a basic truth. No process of nature is a process independent of God. It is an operation of the Supreme.

There are two kinds of devotees who practise complete surrender, viz., patient (Arta-prapanna) and impatient (Dripta-prapanna). The impatient Prapanna finds his present life so unbearable that he seeks for immediate salvation by death. And therefore in his case both kinds of Karma Karma in force (Abhyupagata-prarabdha) and Karma in waiting (Abhyupaagata-prarabdha)-are at once remitted, and the soul accepted for eternal blessedness. The patient Prapanna finds his present life bearable and the present incarnation is the last one to this soul as contradistinguished from the Bhakti where all sins of the soul are remitted, except that which has begun to work and which may require a number of incarnations before it is exhausted. Devotees having the grace of the Saviour or Teacher, initially seeking it or not, are granted salvation automatically.

There is an interesting anecdote in Sri Ramanuja's life which shows how he trained his disciples in the realisation of Prapatti. He had a disciple called Dasarathi who was anxious to know the last word of the Gita. Ramanuja asked him to go to the house of the daughter of his own Teacher Goshtipurna to work there as a cook. Dasarathi readily and

cheerfully accepted the work. He went on serving there giving up all egoism. He was released, however, after some time and Ramanuja gave him instruction about self- surrender, which he had already practised. There is another incident to show how Ramanuja's disciples adopt complete resignation to God. There was one Danurdasa who was so much attached to his beautiful wife that he for- got all etiquette. On being asked by Ramanuja, he in- formed that it was the eyes of Hemamba that seemed to him very enchanting. Ramanuja took him to the temple and showed the deity Ranganatha. Danurdasa fell in love with those more enchanting eyes and forgot the world. Afterwards to teach his other disciples lessons of surrender, and incidentally to inform them about the greatness of his devotee, sent them to Danurdasa's house to steal away the jewels of Hemamba, just to test, he said to them, how she and her husband behaved. He earlier asked Hemamba to put on all jewels for the satisfaction of the Lord. Now the disciples went to the house where she was asleep alone, for the husband was engaged in conversation with the Acharya. When they took half the jewels from her body, she turned, as if in sleep, so that they could take away the jewels from the other side, knowing that God Himself was taking away all His jewels. The disciples got frightened and ran away. When Danurdasa returned and heard the story, he said, 'your, I and Mine' is not yet gone. Lord was taking His things, why did you try to

help Him? Such was the quality of complete surrender the devotee acquired.

CONCLUSION

Religious knowledge can be preserved, in an unadulterated form and handed down to posterity by three main means. They are spiritual discipline, records of ideas and their propagation. Books written by great teachers save their systems from getting mixed up with superstition and wrong ideas. Propagation on the other hand keeps the knowledge alive, fresh and free of superstition. Discussions on scriptural truth promulgated by Ramanuja were being carried on in the monasteries, re- treats and temples and this preserved the spiritual knowledge intact. But mere existence of a method or knowing of it cannot be fruitful in attracting and changing the lives of the people. Religion is nothing, if not realisation, practicalising in life what is preached. Spiritual aspirants get inspiration from the lives of the more advanced Sadhakas. So discipline must be practised and exemplified. Practical discipline hence is the most important part of religious re-establishment. Ramanuja's enunciation of the method of Sadhana gave a clear cut discipline which satisfied the spiritual hunger of devotees down the ages. It has been practised by scores of devotees. It is still a potent force. It is up to the spiritual aspirants to dive deep into his ideas, practise the discipline suggested by him and attain the direct vision of God.

Hari Om Tat Sat

THE TWO SAGES OF CHINA

It is one of history's spectacular coincidences that the two figures who most profoundly influenced Chinese culture are said to have lived in the fabulous sixth century B. C. which also produced Buddha, Pythagoras and per- haps Zoroaster. The first was Lao Tzu, a semi-legendary philosopher whose personality has been elaborated by time and fancy. The other was Confucius, whose life has been well documented and whose family has flourished in an unbroken line down the present day.

Although scholars disagree widely on Lao Tzu, tradition relates that he was born in 604 B.C. on a farm in Honan province. (The name Lao Tzu literally means 'Old Boy' or the 'Eldest') Perhaps the one historic fact about him is that he held the post of curator of the Imperial archives at the court of Chou where he became renowned as a scholar and sage. In time, becoming disgusted with the disorder with the Chou Dynasty, Lao Tzu resigned his post. Then, according to the legend, he decided after a period of meditation to flee society and journey into the un- known west. Riding in a cart drawn by two black bullocks, he came to a final outpost where the gatekeepers recognised him and begged him to stay long enough to write down the main tenets of his philosophy. Lao Tzu agreed and in a few days composed the TAO TE CHLNG, the noble master-work that has been called the Bible of Taoism. He then vanished into the mountain pass, never to be seen again.

Confucius was born into a poor but aristocratic family in Shantang province in 551 B. C. His family name was K'ung- Confucius' being a Latinisation by Je- suit missionaries of K'ung Fu-tzu, i.e. "Grand Master Kung." As a youth he became absorbed in the history, poetry and music of ancient China. Although he aspired to statesmanship and for many years wandered from state to state offering his services, most of his life was spent as a teacher and in the task of editing the classical writing of China's ancient times. Insisting that he was a transmitter, not a creator- "Confucius wrote little himself." But from his utterances, lovingly recorded by his disciples emerged the system of ethics by which China has lived. In the summer of 479 B. C. he fell ill and went to his bed chamber, muttering, "The great mountain must fall. The strong timber is broken. The wise man fades as does the plant." A week later he died.

HARMONY OF MAN AND NATURE

In Chinese thought man does not occupy quite the ascendant role he enjoys in western philosophy, where he is viewed as a protagonist of the natural order and prime object of creation. He is envisaged instead as a single part, though a vital one, of the complex of nature in which he stands. Whereas Western man has sought to conquer nature for his material ends, the Chinese has aspired to attain harmony with nature for his spiritual satisfaction. And whereas many Hindus regard the world of nature as a transitory phenomenon, the Chinese have never doubted

its reality and have viewed its sublime beauty and order as aesthetic entities to be cherished and savoured in life.

From the dawn of China's primitive folk religion, the relationship between man and nature has been conceived, as a deep, reciprocal involvement in which it can affect the other. As the force of nature can bring prosperity or disaster to man, so man disrupts the delicate balance of nature by his misdeeds: for Heaven, Earth and man constitute a single indivisible unity governed by cosmic law (Tao). No boundaries may be drawn between the supernatural world, the domain of nature and that of men. Hence, if this sensitive organism of the triune is to function smoothly, man must do his part. When he conforms to natural law society enjoys tranquillity and peace; when he transgresses, both heaven and nature are disturbed, the intricate machinery of the cosmos breaks down, and calamities ensue.

Characteristically Chinese, this attitude towards nature pervades all of China's poetry, art and religion and underlies the thinking of its great sages whose philosophy is dominated by the notion of Heaven and man in partner-ship. It shines through Confucian ethics where the rules for preserving harmonious relation between man and man are seen as measures to attain deeper harmonies between man and the universe. And it is epitomised in the precepts of Lao Tzu who taught that only by subordinating himself to nature's way could man lead a meaningful existence.

The aspiration toward harmony with nature de- rived from prehistoric times when the ancestors of the race, experiencing the terrors and splendours of nature, saw in them the activities of good and evil powers. With the development of agriculture they became even more aware of their dependence on the regularities of nature and their helplessness before its caprices. On the one hand they accepted the order of the celestial movements, the predictable cycle of seasons, the growth of plants, the stately flow of rivers; and on the other the un- foreseeable violence, of floods, tempests and drought.

From these observations ancient unknown philosophers evolved a cosmology and philosophical interpretation of the natural order. The time may have been as early as 1,000 B.C., about the same era when the great Hindu thinkers were formulating the concepts of the Vedas. But as against the monism developing in Hindu thought, the Chinese sages arrived at a dualistic purview of nature. They found in the universe two interacting principles of forces, the Yang, and the Yin, and concluded that every thing that exists is constituted by the interplay of these forces and possesses in varying degrees the characteristics of both. Each represents a constellation of qualities-Yang is the positive or masculine force-inherent in everything active, warm, hard, dry, bright, pro- creative and steadfast; it is the essence of sunlight and fire, it is the south side of a hill, the north bank of a river. Yin is the negative or feminine

principle immanent in every thing passive, cold, wet, soft, dark, mysterious, secret, change- able, cloudy, dim and quiescent; it is the essence of shadow and water; it is a shade on the north side of the hill and the south bank of a river. Through their eternal intercourse all things have come into being, including Heaven (which is predominantly Yang in character) and Earth (which is pre- dominantly Yin). In the same object one principle may prevail at one time, another later as in the case of a piece of wood which, when cast into a fire, changes character from Yin to Yang. But everything in the universe--the five elements, men and women, events (success and failure, rise and fall, flowering and decay) contain within them- selves these primeval energy modes.

The essential difference between the Chinese conception of Yin and Yang and other classical philosophical dualism- i.e., light and darkness, good and evil-lies in the fact that latter are involved in eternal conflict, whereas Yin and Yang are basically in accord. Both the feminine Yin and the masculine Yang are necessary to the order of the universe: they are complimentary, together in harmony they are always good. But 'how is one to account for this harmony between two opposites? How can they work together, abandoning their disparate identities, to produce the miraculous order in nature?' The answer is: the source of their harmony, the origin of all the order in the world is Tao.

The concept of Tao lies in the very heart of Chinese philosophical speculation: generations of scholars have expended lifetimes endeavouring to define it. In its narrowest term Tao means literally 'a way', 'a road', 'a channel' and so, by extension, it may connote 'the proper way to go', 'the law of life', 'the universal law'. From the beginning of time, when the great Ultimate or first primordial unit of cosmos began to divide into differentiated elements Yin and Yang, the Tao was operating as the force for integration, the meditating and corrective principle in the cos- mic mechanism, transcending both the world of nature and the unseen world. Heaven itself works through Tao; the gods act always in accordance with its way.

Appearing in the earliest philosophical writings of ancient China, the concept of Tao reached its apogee in the Tao Te Ching, the collection of arcane and mystical poems attributed to the philosopher Lao Tzu. At the out- set the author says that it is impossible to define Tao; the Tao that can be named is not the real eternal Tao; no word or name can define nature's deepest secret-the secret of creation and life. Although Tao is the ultimate source of all things, "whose offspring it may be, I do not know, it is like a preface to God." Through Tao all things have been given life and form. "It existed before heaven and earth.... It stands alone and unchanging. It permeates all."

Following this prelude, the book goes on to develop the thesis that knowledge of Tao is the secret of life; the aim of

human existence is to attain harmony with Tao and thereby find peace and enlightenment. The concord of Heaven and Earth is achieved only when Tao is allowed to take its natural course. Unhappily, man tends to pursue his own headstrong purposes; by meddling and interfering with the process of nature and countering the rhythm of Tao he disarranges the cosmic order. It is thus from the wilfulness and waywardness of man that all the ills of society are engendered. The solution lies therefore in resigning one's will to Tao and be- coming the instrument of its eternal way. "Leave all things to take their natural course and do not interfere.... What is contrary to Tao soon perishes. Since Tao works unobtrusively, the wise man will not be assertive. The way of heaven is not to contend and yet to be able to conquer."

If everybody lived according to Tao, naturally and simply, free from ambition and aggression, the world would witness a spontaneous florescence of good fellowship and brotherly love. Applied to political problems the law of Tao is patently LAISSEZ FAIRE: the corridor to peace and freedom lies in non-interference by government in the lives of men. It also precludes war. "Soldiers are weapons of evil. They are not the weapons of gentlemen. Even in victory, there is no beauty. And who calls it beautiful is one who delights in slaughter." Occasionally Tao Te Ching rises to heights surpassing all other teachings save those of Christ. "Repay evil with good.... For love is victorious in attack, and

in- vulnerable in defence. Heaven arms with love those it would not see destroyed."

Although the Tao Te Ching exerted little influence on Chinese thought for sometime after its composition, its teaching was later elaborated by a succession of scholars and sages into the philosophy of life known as Taoism. As such it became one of the two moulding influences in Chinese thought. The other was the ethical system of Confucius and his disciples. Where Taoism preached the virtues of simple life and communion with nature, the denial of selfishness and mystical union with the Ultimate, Confucianism concerned itself with the immediate exigencies of human existence and the problems of social order.

For Confucius, as for Lao Tzu, the concept of Tao represented the great law of life. "If a man in the morn- ing embraces Tao", Confucius said, "then he may die the same evening without regret", and again, "As to the Tao, we must not be separated from it for a single moment."

As opposed to Lao, however Confucius was a pragmatic philosopher and a humanist, who never lost sight of the contemporary scene in rapt contemplation of a mystical ideal. The factor which most uniquely distinguishes Confucius both from Tao Tzu and the philosophers of the Western world is that he deals less in terms of general principles than of specific personal relationships. Where

the Greek thinkers, the Platonists, the Scholatics, and their European successors juggled abstract concepts like 'Justice', 'Law', and 'Virtue', Confucius applied his thoughts to his people. His great achievement was the establishment of a system of human relationships within the social order. From this system there emerged the principles of action and behaviour that shaped the pattern of Chinese civilisation for twenty-five centuries.

The essence of Confucius' ethics lies in the formula- tion of five relationships; between ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, older friend and younger friend. These five are the 'great' relationships which Confucius recognised as fundamental to the social order. In accenting the necessity of their careful observance, Confucius uses an important word, Li, which means roughly, 'propriety', 'ideal', 'standard of conduct'. By universal devotion to Li, human relationships can be so ordered that an ideal social structure will result and harmony reign throughout the land.

Although the Confucian emphasis dwells most weightily on reverence for elders--the ruler, the father, the elder brother, social obligations are by no means one-sided. Confucius made this clear when a disciple asked him if there was one word which might serve as a cardinal precept of life. Confucius replied, "Is not Altruism such a word? What do you not want done to yourself, do not do to others." From this principle-analogous to the Golden

rule of Christianity-Confucius' disciples later evolved the ten attitudes by which the five relationships should be governed. They are: love in the father, filial piety in the son, gentility in the eldest brother, humility and respect in the youngest; righteous behaviour in the husband, obedience in the wife, humane consideration in elders, deference in juniors, benevolence in rulers and loyalty in subjects.

Confucius never claimed to be the originator of his ethical code. He drew many of his ideas from the classical writings of ancient China and constantly exhorted his pupils and disciples to revere the customs of the past. But by codifying traditional precepts, illuminating them with his own insights and contributing new principles of his own, he helped to create one of the world's most durable social edifices. Since Confucius' day, 2,500 years ago, the whole of Chinese culture has rested on the solidarity of the family—an institution that has maintained the fabric of society through recurrent times of chaos and disorder. The Confucian concept of filial piety has permeated all of Chinese thought, the empire itself became a kind of gigantic family in which the emperor was the benevolent father, the subjects his children.

Believing, like all Chinese, in the essential and original goodness of man, Confucius held that stern laws were unnecessary and that character is the root of civilisation. "If the ruler is virtuous" he said, "the people will also be virtuous." Convinced that his teachings con- formed to Tao

and had the backing of Heaven, he had little to say about the religious sanctions. While he acknowledged the existence of spirits and adhered to established rituals especially those in honour of ancestors he was in- different to matters above and beyond the social order. "Absorption in the study of supernatural is most harmful," he said. "To devote oneself earnestly to one's duty to humanity, and while respecting the spirits, to keep them at a distance may be called wisdom."

So together Confucius and Lao Tzu moulded the Chinese temperament. And somehow the Chinese temper- ament has managed to reflect them both-though in essence the two philosophies are as dissimilar as Yang and Yin. Where the Taoists look to nature in order to know nature, Confucianists looked within themselves in order to know nature. Confucianism is rational, orderly, matter of fact, humanistic; Taoism is romantic, intuitive, mystical, vague. Yet each has deeply infiltrated and profoundly influenced Chinese culture, as the modern scholar and philosopher Dr Lin Yutang points out. Confucianism, he has observed, is a philosophy for times of peace and prosperity, and Taoism a philosophy for times of trouble and disorder. "All Chinese", he says, "are Confucianists when they are successful and Taoists when they are failures."

CONFUCIANISM: Although Confucius never envisaged himself as the founder of a faith, the school of thought developed by his disciples in time acquired the aspect of a

religious cult. Under successive dynasties state worship was accorded to Confucius not a God, but as a sage and as an ideal. The first sign that he had become an object of veneration came in 195 B.C. when the emperor Kao Tsu, founder of the Han Dynasty, visited his tomb and offered sacrifices. In 136 B.C., the Emperor Wu made Confucianism the basic discipline for the training of Government officials.

From that time onward emperor after emperor sought to outdo his predecessors in honouring Confucius' name. In 59 A.D. sacrifices were ordered for him in all urban schools. During the seventh and eighth centuries temples were erected in every prefecture of the empire as shrines to him and his principal disciples. Twice a year the emperor would visit the great temple in Peking and after kowtowing would apostrophize the sage: "Great art thou, O thou of perfect wisdom. Full is thy virtue, thy doctrine complete. Mortal have never known thy equal. All kings honour thee. Thine ordinance and laws have come down to us in glory. Filled with awe we clash our cymbals and strike our bells."

As the centuries passed, posthumous titles were heaped on Confucius. He was named, progressively Duke, Prince, Venerable sage of Former times and Sa- cred teacher of Antiquity. He was raised to the ranks of the gods and awarded the same sacrifices as the sun and the moon. Finally in 1906 the last Manchu emperor elevated him to a position beside Heaven and Earth, the highest object of worship. Although the cult of Confucianism languished

after the empire, the Nationalist Government in 1934 proclaimed Confucius' birthday a holiday an occasion still observed today by free Chinese and others who venerate the sage.

TAOISM: Just as Confucianism evolved from a school of thought into a cult, so in time Taoism became overlaid with a farrago of occultism and magic. It developed a mythology of its own in which the hereafter some- times became a kind of wonderland ruled by a fairy queen and peopled with happy immortals. The uneducated Chinese could find little solace in Lao Tzu's mystical philosophy. But there was one passage in the Tao Te Ching that touched them deeply: "He who contains within himself the richness of Tao's virtues is like a babe. No poisonous in- sects sting him. No fierce beasts seize. No birds of prey strike him. He who attains Tao is everlasting. Though his body may decay, he never perishes." More than any other people the Chinese have looked forward to old age-the time of ease envisaged by Confucianism-and sought ways of prolonging earthly existence. In time the hope of attain- ing Tao becomes the hope of attaining earthly immortality.

Many Taoist teachers drifted away from Lao Tzu's original thought. Over and above their traditional functions, they began to claim supernatural powers; they could foretell the future, engender tempests and prolong life through breathing exercises and diets of powdered dragon bones, moon beams and mother of pearls. Driven by the desire of

immortality, people left their homes and headed for lonely mountain retreats, there to spiritualise them- selves through ascetic practices. Fields remained unplowed and business came to a halt, because their owners were away on pilgrimages or engaged in spiritual discipline.

During the first century A.D., the popularity of Taoism was threatened by the official importation from India of Buddhism, which swept across the country winning innumerable converts. In response to this challenge Taoism transformed itself into a formal religion. In the west a Taoist named Chang Ling (who supposedly dis- covered the pill of immortality) founded a religious or- der which by the end of the second century had grown into a semiclerical state with organised worship, monasteries, fixed tribute and priesthood.

In some matters, the new Taoism borrowed heavily from Buddhism; in others it developed its own ideas and practices. For example, although the concept of paradise was foreign to the Chinese, they quickly elaborated on it; where the Buddhist had 33 different kinds of Heaven, the Taoist came up with 81. Not only did they populate the Heavens with many of the old gods of folk religion (e.g. the God of Wealth, the Kitchen God, the City God, Nature God), but they also admitted some of the Mahayana Buddhist's deities and created a great number of new ones. They dedicated God to stars, metals, occupations, ancient heroes, epidemics, mythical animals and such activities as

robbery and drunkenness. The Top God of the Taoist pantheon, the Jade emperor, was allegedly invented in 1012 A.D. by the emperor Chein Tsung who, for political reasons, needed a revelation from heaven.

As the centuries passed Taoism slowly descended to gloomy levels of idolatry and superstition. Loaded down with an incubus of. sorcery, fortune telling, charm-selling and alchemy, it became more akin to Voodooism, than to the noble philosophy of Lao Tzu. Worship became magic and its object the attainment of earthly blessings. Its priests were hired employees who performed rituals without any conception of spiritual leadership. Long before the end of the 19th Century, as a consequence to the spread of scientific awareness, Taoism was dying as a religion. The heritage of Lao Tzu was thus not Taoism, but his concept of Tao, whence comes enlight- enment and inner Joy. to ni maidbbull.)

Ancestors, to honour them is the heart of Chinese faith: centuries before Confucius, in the dawn of Eastern culture, a reverence for the progenitors constituted the heart and core of Chinese religious life. Ancestral shrines existed as early as the Shang Dynasty (1776-1122 B.C.) and many of the rituals for mourning and burial that have become part of Confucius and Taoist tradition were prescribed in the ancient classics. The conviction that no person is an isolated entity but also an indispensable link in an endless

chain of humanity is the binding force underlying the solidarity of the Chinese family.

When the Chinese use the word family, they do not confine the term to those who live under a single roof, or even to all living kindred; they also include their fore- bears whom they conceive as members of the living heritage. No man's home or property, nor even his body, is his exclusive possession, but belongs to his ancestors as well. The fortune of the living and the dead, moreover, are inextricably intertwined. When an individual dies he may become and hope to become a good spirit, beneficent and helpful to his heirs; but it is also possible he may join the army of demons. What fate befalls him is determined not only by his own past actions and consequent moral status, but by the solicitude with which his descendants honour his memory.

It is a practical mistake, therefore, as well as a sin, not to insure that all proprieties are observed that the correct mourning cloths are worn, an adequate procession ar- ranged, and food offerings regularly set forth. The more elaborate the funeral ceremonies and the more frequent the subsequent memorial rites, it is popularly believed, the better the prospect that the departed will become a happy and therefore a friendly spirit. "To serve those now dead as if they were living," Confucius said, "is the highest achievement of true filial piety."

Communists and Confucius (by Lin Yutang): It is of the essence of life that living in the present we must think of the present. Through the vistas of history can man, by a foreshortening process of the mind, see patterns moving across the decades, even centuries. Back in 1928-29, Russian proletarian novels were popular reading among the youth of China. Twenty years later, a Communist state came into being in the land of Confucius.

Long before the coming of the Communist regime, Confucianism had a period of decline, swept aside by a wave of intellectual radicalism starting in 1919. A definite feeling was in the air, that China must get on a change and forget the past, or perish. The generation which grew up in the first years of the republic did not so much attack or oppose Confucianism as they ridiculed and ignored it. All this was inevitable in an age of vast intellec- tual ferment of a generation impatient for reform, unrooted in the past, confident and some what naive. Confucius was also unfortunate in his allies-the warlords who were nat- urally supporters of old-fashioned morality. Sooner or later there was bound to be change and a better recognition of Confucian humanism and its appraisal of human nature and social values. As the years went by, the young radicals matured; the professors began to "see something" in Con- fucianism after all. All during the war years, a scholar at Tsing Hua university in Peking, Professor Fung Yu-lan, was producing a magnum opus, a new interpretation of Neo-

Confucianism. Then his work was thwarted by politi- cal events under the Communist regime. Professor Fung found it convenient to denounce the results of his lifetime of study, recant his beliefs in idealism with much beating of breast and publicly thank the 'masses for opening his eyes'. Whatever independent thinking there was came to a stop by the end of 1952. For the present, at least, both Confucian and Taoist ideals are officially regarded as 'poison'. Just as Christianity as dope for the poor, Confucian books are not so much verbatim as ignored. All ancient books are supposed to contain 'poison'. History books for students are systematically rewritten. Communist workers are re- placing village elders. Elders and anyone else respected by the village community, or anyone acquainted with organisational technique is a potential leader of the opposition, and as such is liquidated, no matter how innocent the parti-sans know the person to be. It is an ideological necessity accepted by party workers.

Westerners who have lived in China and come to know the Chinese people as they have found it hard to believe that a nation characterised by common sense, moderation and a homely geniality of living can be transformed into zealots and fanatic followers of Marxism. The question may be asked: how vital are Confucian ideas of humanism and Taoist ideas of laissez faire in modern Chinese Society, and how will the Chinese philosopher-temper reassert itself? The question should be divided into two: One, can there be

a compromise between Marxism and Confucianism, or can the Confucian temper for moderation and respect for human relations influence and change Chinese Communism in the future? And two, how valid the Confucian and Taoist teaching are today?

It is a truism to say that Confucianism, with its family systems, its hard-boiled sense that charity must begin at home, its insistence on proper social relationships extended to the nation, from right mental attitudes developed in childhood at home, has set the tone for Chinese society for 2,500 years. In every aspect of social life-filial piety, respect for scholars, village government by elders, respect for age, selection of talents for leadership-Chinese society bears the stamp of Confucius.

These positive aspects of Chinese life, a keen sense of responsibility for one's fellow men, are offset by an-other important stream of negative characteristics--a cer- tain nonchalant, poetic attitude of calm contentment and devil-may-care old roguery-in which we can recognise the influence of Taoism. The combination of the positive, responsible attitude when a Chinese gentleman bears the burden of the world on his shoulders, and the attitude of the old rogue on the open road, when the same person is willing to let the world take care of itself in a mood of po-etic irresponsibility and truly religious trust in Tao-this peculiar mixture has produced the characteristic mores of

the Chinese people. I personally think that the second attitude is priceless.

However, every nation has its shortcomings, and if all the iniquities of the Chinese people are put upon Confucius' shoulders, the sins of Confucius are many. We tend to ascribe the character of a nation, necessarily complex, to one simple source. Anyway, Confucius or the Chinese nation, forgot to develop something akin to habeas corpus for law courts, and his great disciple, Mencius, developed the idea of benevolent government. Without protection of civil rights the idea that our rulers should or would love us like our parents is naive to the extreme. Personally I think one writ of habeas corpus is worth more than the Confucian Analects.

It must be remembered, however, that Confucius was primarily a moral and social philosopher, and only secondarily a political theorist. In a time of chaos, he blieved the solution was moral and social, rather than political. That idea is as good as gold. He aimed at political peace by first establishing a social order based on proper respect for human relationships, and he believed that this social order must be based on the cultivation of the individual through education and the arts, particularly music. When the individuals are cultivated and reformed from within and live as good father, political order will follow of its, own accord. Somewhat idealistic-yes, but all great teachers are.

The first question about the possible compromise between the Confucian temper and the Marxist temper and outlook must be answered in the negative. Madam Sun Yat-Sen expressed the Communists' orthodox view- point best when she said, "Confucian teachings are feudalistic and autocratic from beginning to end. We must realise how deeply Confucian influences have been imbedded in our art, literature, social sciences and morals. We must make great efforts to uproot Confucian ideas from every nook and corner of our life and thoughts." Such great efforts are being made. Of the over 15,000 books published by the Commercial Press in Chinese, only 224 titles remained in the selling list by the end of 1952. The rest were destroyed. Of the over 12,000 titles published by Chung Hwa Book Company, some 1,500 remained.

In every country, society lives by a set of moral values. In Christian countries, these virtues-such as honesty, kindness, justice and the value of the individual are represented by the Christian code. In China, they happen to be represented by Confucianism. Thus Communism finds it necessary to strike at the core of the Confucian teachings by breaking up family loyalty. The denunciation of their parents by boys and girls of 13 and 14 is systematically encouraged and such boys and girls are paraded through towns as model citizens. And it is not difficult to teach the young to disobey parents.

The case of denouncing of Lu Chih-wei, president of Yenching University, by his daughter is typical and enlightening. President Lu had already been submitted to public trials several times and he has mercilessly excoriated himself in public in following terms, "ambassador Leighton Stuart (of the U.S.) chose me because he knew that I was pro-American to the bones, that I was will- ing to carry out American cultural invasion at Yenching University. For selfish reasons, I, of my own will, fell into the trap and did harm to countless youths." This was considered unsatisfactory. At the next trial, his daughter, Lu Yaollua, rose up and, pointing her finger at him said, "I tried to protect you because I believed in affection between parent and child. Even if it was true affection, how could emotion compare with the broad love of the masses? Why can't I rise up and fight you like the Korean volunteers."

The second question is: Given normal freedom of thought, how valid are Confucian and Taoist teachings today? Generally moral teacher outlasts politicians. Gandhi will outlast Nehru and Confucius and Lao Tzu will outlast Mao Tse-tung. The Confucian golden rule must survive. As for the Witticisms of Lao Tzu, his depth, his brilliance and his profound iconoclasm will always recommend themselves to the searching human mind. His teachings on gentleness and humility will always stand as the sermon on the mount will always stand, irrespective of political persecutions.

Can the Chinese people, apart from their ideological rulers, accept the Communist negation of their traditional ways and beliefs? The answer is, they have to. Can they accept the more rigorous, totalitarian pattern of life geared to production for the state? The answer is again, they have to. But thoughts and ideas are somewhat like seeds.

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE

Physiological duration owes its existences and its characteristics to a certain type of organisation of animate matter. It appears as soon as a portion of space containing living cells becomes relatively isolated from the cosmic world. At all levels of organisation in the body of a cell or in that of a man, the physiological time depends on modifications of the medium produced by nutrition, and on the response of the cells to those modifications. A cell colony begins to record time as soon as its waste products are allowed to stagnate, and thus to alter its surroundings. The simplest system where the phenomenon of senescence is observed consists of a group of tissue cells cultivated in a small volume of nutritive medium. In such a system the medium progressively modifies the cells. Then appear senescence and death. The rhythm of physiological time de- pends on the relations between the tissues and their medium. It varies according to the volume, the metabolic activity, the nature of the cell colony, and the quantity and the chemical composition of the fluid and gaseous media. The technique used in the preparation of a culture accounts for the rhythm of life in such culture. For example, a frag- ment of heart fed with a single drop of plasma in the con- fined atmosphere of a hallow slide, and another one, immersed in a flask containing large volume of nutritive fluids and gases, have quite different fates. The rate of accumulation of waste products in the medium, and

the nature of these products, determine the characteristics of the duration of the tissues. When the composition of the medium is maintained constant, the cell colonies remain indefinitely in the same state of activity. They record time by quantitative, and not by qualitative changes and by an appropriate technique the volume is prevented from increasing, they never grow old. Colonies obtained from a heart fragment removed in January, 1912 from a chick embryo, are growing as actively today as twenty-three years ago. In fact they are immortal.

Within the body the relations of the tissues and of their medium are incomparably more complex than in the artificial system represented by a culture of cells. Although the lymph and the blood which constitute the organic medium, are continually modified by the waste products of cell nutrition, their composition is maintained constant by the lungs, kidneys, liver, etc. However, in spite of the regulatory mechanism, very slow changes do take place in humours and tissues. They are detected by variations in the growth index of plasma, and in the constant that expresses the regenerative activity of skin. They correspond to successive states in the chemical composition of the humours. The proteins of blood serum become more abundant and their characters are modified. It is chiefly the fats which give to serum the property of acting upon certain cell types and diminishing the rapidity of their multi-plication. These fats increase in quantity and change

in nature during life. The modifications of serum are not the result of a progressive accumulation of a sort of retention of fats and proteins in the organic medium. It is quite easy to remove from a dog the greater part of its blood, to separate the plasma from the corpuscles, and to replace it by a saline solution. The blood cells thus freed from the proteins and fatty substances of plasma, are reinjected into the animal. In less than a fortnight, plasma is observed to be regenerated by the tissues, without any change in its com- position. Its state, is therefore, due to the condition of the tissues, and not to an accumulation of harmful substances. And this state is specific of every age. Even if blood serum is removed several times, it always regenerates with the characteristics corresponding to the age of the animal. The state of the humours during senescence thus appears to be determined by substances contained in the organs as in almost inexhaustible reservoirs.

In the course of life, the tissues undergo important alterations. They lose much water. They are encumbered with non-living elements and connective fibres which are neither elastic nor extensible. The organs ac- quire more rigidity. Arteries become hard, circulation is less active. Profound modifications take place in the structure of the glands. Epithelial cells lose their qualities little by little. They regenerate more slowly, or not at all.

Their secretions are less rich. Such changes occur at various rates, according to the organs. But we do not know as yet the reason for the phenomenon. Such a regional senescence may attack the arteries, the heart, the brain, the kidneys or any other organ. The ageing of a single system of tissue is dangerous. Longevity is much greater when the elements of the body grow old in a uniform way. If the skeletal muscles remain active when the heart and the vessels are already worn out, they become a danger to the en- tire body. Abnormally vigorous organs in a senile organism are almost as harmful as senile organ in a young organism. The functioning of any anatomical system, either sexual glands, digestive apparatus, or muscles, is very dangerous for old men. Obviously, the value of time is not the same for all tissues. This heterochronism shortens the duration of life. If excessive work is imposed on any part of the body, even in individuals whose tissues are isochronic, ageing is also accelerated. An organ which is submitted to over-activity, toxic influences, and abnormal stimulations, wears out more quickly than the others. And its premature senility brings on the death of the organism.

We know that physiological time, like physical time, is not an entity. Physical time depends on the constitution of clocks and the solar system; physiological time, on that of the tissues and humours, and on their reciprocal relations. The characteristics of duration are those of the structural and functional processes specific of a certain type of

organisation. The length of life is conditioned by the very mechanisms that make man in- dependent of the cosmic environment and give him his spatial mobility, by the small volume of blood, by the activity of systems responsible for the purification of the humours. These systems do not succeed in preventing certain progressive modifications of the serum and the tissues from occurring. Perhaps the tissues are not completely freed of waste products by the blood stream. Perhaps they are insufficiently fed. If the volume of the organic medium were much greater and the elimination of the waste products more complete, human life might last longer. But our body would become larger, softer, less compact. It would resemble the gigantic prehistoric animals. We certainly would be deprived of the agility, the speed, and the skill that we now possess.

Like physiological time, psychological time is only an aspect of ourselves. Its nature, like that of memory, is unknown. Memory is responsible for our awareness of the passage of time. However, psychological duration is composed of other elements. Personality is partly made up of recollections. But it also comes from the impressions left upon all our organs by every physical, chemical, physiological or psychological event of our life. We obscurely feel the passing of duration. We are capable of estimating such duration, in a grossly approximative manner, in terms of physical time. We perceive its flux, as, perhaps, do muscular or nervous elements. Each cell type

records physical time in its own way. The value of time for nerves and muscles is expressed, as already mentioned in chronaxies. All anatomical elements are far from having the same chronax. The isochronism and heterochronism of cells play a capital part in their work. This estimation of time by the tissue may possibly reach the threshold of consciousness, and be responsible for the indefinable feeling in the depth of our self of silently flowing waters, on which float our state of consciousness, like the spots of a search-light on the dark surface of immense river. We realise that we change, that we are not identical with our former self, but that we are the same being. The distance from which we look back upon the small child, who was ourself, is precisely the dimension of our organism and of our consciousness, which we compare to a spatial dimension. Of this aspect of inward time we know nothing, except that it is both dependent and independent of the rhythm of organic life, and moves more and more rapidly as we grow older.

The greatest desire of men is for eternal youth. From Merlin down to Cagliostro, Brown-Sequard, and Varonoff, charlatans, and scientists have pursued the same dream and suffered the same defeat. No one has discovered the supreme secret. Meanwhile our need of it becoming more and more urgent. Scientific civilisation has destroyed the world of the soul. But the realm of matter is widely open to man. He must, then, keep intact the vigour of his body and

of his intelligence. Only the strength of youth gives him the power to satisfy physiological appetites and to conquer the outer world. In some measure, however, we have realised the ancestral dream. We enjoy youth, or its appearance for a much longer time than our fathers did. But we have not succeeded in increasing the duration of our existence. A man of forty-five has no more chance of dying at the age of eighty years now than in the last century.

This failure of hygiene and medicine is a strange fact. In spite of the progress achieved in the heating, ventilation and lighting of houses, of dietary hygiene, bathroom and sports, of periodical medical examinations, and increasing number of medical specialists, not even one day has been added to the span of life. Are we to believe that hygienists, chemists, and physicians are mistaken in their ruling of existence of the individual, like politicians, economists and financiers in the organisation of the life of the nation? After all, it may be that modern comfort and habits imposed upon the dwellers of the new city do not agree with the natural laws. How- ever, a marked change has taken place in the appearance of men and women. Owing to hygiene, atheletics, alimentary restrictions, beauty parlours and to the superficial activity engendered by telephone and automobile, all are more alert than in the former times. At fifty, women are still young. Modern progress, however, has brought in its train counterfeit money as well as gold. When their visages, lifted and smoothed by the beauty

surgeon, again become flabby, when massage no longer prevails against invading fat, those women whose appearance has been girlish for so many years look older than their grandmothers did at the same. The pseudo-youngmen who play tennis and dance as at twenty-five years, who discard their old wife, and marry young women, are liable to softening of the brain, and to the disease of the heart at an age when their ancestors were still tilling the land or managing their business with a firm hand. The causes of this failure of modern life are not exactly known. Indeed, hygienists and physicians cannot be responsible for it. The premature wearing out of modern men is probably due to worries, lack of economic security, overwork, absence of moral discipline, and excess of all sorts.

A better knowledge of mechanisms of physiological duration could bring a solution of the problem of longevity. But the science of man is still rudimentary to be useful. We must, then, ascertain, in a purely empirical manner, whether life can be made longer. The presence of a few centenarians in every country demonstrates the ex- tent of our temporal potentialities. No practical conclusions however, has resulted so far from the observation of these centenarians. Obviously longevity is hereditary. But it depends also on the conditions of development. When descendents of families where longevity is usual come to dwell in large cities, they generally lose, on one or two

generations, the capacity of living to be old. A study of animals of pure stock and of well-known ancestral constitution would probably show in what measure environment may augment the span of existence. In certain races of mice mated between brothers and sisters over many generations, the duration of life remains quite constant. How-ever, if one places the animals in large pens, in a state of semi-liberty, instead of keeping them in cages, and allows them to burrow and return to more primitive conditions of existence, they die much earlier. When certain substances are removed from the diet longevity is also found to de-crease. On the contrary life lengthens if the animals are given certain foods or subjected to fasting during certain fixed periods for several generations. It is evident that simple changes in the mode of existence are capable of influencing the duration of life. Man's longevity could probably be augmented by analogous, or other procedures.

We must not yield to the temptation to use blindly for this purpose the means placed at our disposal by medicine. Longevity is only desirable, if it increases the dura- tion of youth, and not that of old age. The lengthening of the senescent period would be a calamity. The ageing individual, when not capable of providing for himself, is an en- cumbrance to his family and to the community. If all men lived to be one hundred years old, the younger members of the population could not support such a heavy

burden. Before attempting to prolong life we must discover methods for conserving organic and mental activities to the eve of death. It is imperative that the number of the diseased, the paralysed, the weak and the insane should not be augmented. Besides, it would not be wise to give anybody a long existence. The danger of increasing the quantity of human beings without regard to their quality is well known. Why should more years be added to the life of per-sons who are unhappy, selfish, stupid and useless? The number of centenarians must not be augmented until we can prevent intellectual and moral decay, and also the lingering diseases of old age.

It would be more useful to discover a method of rejuvenating individuals whose physiological and mental qualities justify such a measure. Rejuvenation can be conceived as a complete reversal of inward time. The subject would be carried back to a previous stage of life by some operation one would amputate, a part of his fourth dimension. However, for practical purposes, rejuvenation should be given a more restricted meaning and be considered psychological. Time would not be changed. Memory would persist. Tissues and humours would be rejuvenated. With the help of organs in possession of their youthful vigour, the subject could utilise the experience acquired in the course of a long life. The word rejuvenation, when used in connection with the experiments and operations carried out by Steinach, Voronoff, and others,

refers to an improvement in the general condition of the patients, to a feeling of strength and of sprightliness, to a revival of the sexual function. But such changes occurring in an old man after the treatment do not mean that rejuvenation has taken place. Studies of the chemical composition of the blood se- rum, and of its physiological reactions are the only means of detecting a reversal of physiological age. A permanent increase in the growth of index of serum would demonstrate the reality of results claimed by the surgeons. For rejuvenation is equivalent to a certain physiological and chemical modifications measurable in blood plasma. Nevertheless, the absence of such findings does not necessarily mean that the age of the subject has not decreased. Our techniques are still far from perfect. They cannot reveal, in an old individual, a reversal of physiological time of less than several years. If a fourteen year old dog were brought back to the age of ten, the change in the growth index of serum would be hardly discernible.

Among the ancient medical superstitions, there was a persistent belief in the virtue of young blood, in its power to impart youth to an old and wornout body. Pope Innocent VIII had the blood of three young men trans- fused into his veins. But after this operation he died. As it is quite likely that death was due to a technical accident, perhaps the idea requires reconsideration. The introduction of young blood into an old organism might

bring about favourable changes. It is strange that such an opera- tion has not been tried again. This omission is due, possibly, to the fact that endocrine glands have gained the favour of the physician Brown-Sequard, after having injected into himself a fresh extract of testicle, believed that he was rejuvenated. This discovery brought him very great fame. However, he died shortly afterwards. But faith in the testicle as an agent of rejuvenation survived. Steinach at- tempted to demonstrate that the ligature of its duct stimulates the glands. He performed this operation on many old men. But the results were doubtful. Brown-Sequard's idea was taken up again and extended by Veronoff. The latter instead simply injecting testicular extracts, grafted in old men, or men prematurely aged, testicles from chimpan- zees. It is incontestable that the operation was followed by an improvement in the general condition and the sexual functions of the patients. But the testicle of a chimpanzee does not live long in a man. During the process of degeneration, it may set free certain secretary products, and these substances, passing into the circulating blood, probably activate the sexual and other endocrine glands of the subject. Such operations do not give long lasting results. Old age, as we know, due to profound modifications of all the tissues and humours and not to the deficiency of a single gland. The loss of activity of the sexual glands is not the cause of senescence, but one of its consequences. It is probable that neither Steinach nor

Voronoff has ever observed true rejuvenation. But their failure does not by any means signify that rejuvenation is forever impossible to obtain.

We can believe that a partial reversal of physiological time will become realisable. Duration, as already mentioned, consists of certain structural and functional processes. True age depends on progressive changes of the tissues and humours. Tissues and humours are one and the same system. If an old man were given the glands of still born infant and the blood of a young man, he would possibly be rejuvenated. Many technical hurdles remain to be overcome before such an operation can be undertaken. We have no way of selecting organs suitable to a given individual. There is no procedure tissues capable of adapting themselves to the body of their host in a definitive manner. But the progress of science is swift. With the aid of the methods already existing and of those which will be discovered, we pursue the search for the great secret.

Man will never tire of seeking immortality. He will not attain it because he is bound by certain laws of his organic constitution. He may succeed in retarding, perhaps even in reversing in some measure, the inexorable advance of physiological time. Never will he vanquish death. Death is the price he has to pay for his brain and his personality. But some day medicine will teach him that old age, free from diseases of the body and the soul, is not to be feared. To illness and not to senescence are due most of our woes.

The human significance of physical time is bound naturally to the nature of inner time. We have already mentioned that physiological time is a flux of irreversible changes of the tissues and humours. It may be approximately measured in special units, each until being equivalent to a certain functional modification of blood se- rum. Its characteristics depend on the structure of the organism and of the physical processes connected with such structure. They are specific of each species, of each individual, and of the age of each individual.

Physiological time is generally referred to physical time, to the time of a clock, inasmuch as we are part of the material world. The natural periods of our life are measured in days or years. Infancy, childhood and adolescence last about eighteen years, maturity and old age, fifty or eighty years. Thus man consists of a brief period of development and of a long period of competition and de- cay. On the contrary, physical time may be referred to physiological time, and the time of a clock expressed in terms of human duration. Then a strange phenomenon occurs. Physical times loses the uniformity of its value. The content of a year in units of physiological time becomes variable. It is different for each individual, and for each period of an individual's life.

One perceives, more or less clearly, the changes in the value of physical time, which occur in the course of one's life. The days of our childhood seemed very slow, and those of our maturity are disconcertingly rapid. Possibly we

experience this feeling because we unconsciously place physical time in the frame of our duration. And, naturally, physical time seems to vary inversely to it. The rhythm of our duration slows down progressively, physical time glides along at a uniform rate. It is like a large river flowing through a plain. At the dawn of his life, man briskly runs along the bank, and he goes faster than the stream. Towards midday, his pace slackens. The waters now glide as speedily as he walks. When night falls, man is tired. The stream accelerates the swiftness of its flow. Man drops far behind. Then he stops, and lies down forever. And the river inexorably continues on its course. In fact, the river never accelerates its flow. Only the progressive slackening of our pace is responsible for this illusion. The seeming length of the first part of our existence and the brevity of the last may also be due to the well-known fact that, for the child and for the old man, a year represents quite different proportions of the past. It is more probable, however, that our consciousness vaguely perceives the slowing down of our time-that is, of our physiological processes, and that each one of us runs along the bank and looks at the streaming waters of physical time.

The value of the days of early childhood is very great. Every moment should be utilised for education. The waste of this period of life can never be compensated. Instead of being allowed to grow like plants or little animals, children should be the object of the most enlightened training. But this

training calls for a profound knowledge of not yet been given the opportunity of acquiring. The declining years of maturity and senescence have little physiological value. They are almost empty of organic and mental changes. They have to be filled with artificial activities. The ageing man should neither stop working nor retire.

Inaction further impoverishes the content of time. Leisure is even more dangerous for the old than for the young. To those whose forces are declining, appropriate work should be given, but not rest. Neither should physiological processes be stimulated at this moment. It is preferable to hide their slowness under a number of psychological events. If our days are filled with mental and spiritual adventures, they glide much less rapidly. They may even recover the plentitude of those of youth.

Duration is wedded to man, like the shape to the marble of the statue. Man refers all the events of his world to himself. He uses his span of life as a time unit in his estimation of the age of the earth, of his own undertakings. Nevertheless, an individual and a nation cannot be placed in the same temporal scale. Social problems should not be considered in the same light as individual ones. They evolve very slowly. Our observations and our experiences are always too short. For this reason, they have little significance. The results of a modification in the material and mental conditions of the existence of a population rarely manifest themselves in less than a century.

However, the investigation of great biological questions confined to isolated individuals. There is no provision for the continuation of their work when they die. In a like manner, scientific and political institutions are conceived in terms of individual duration. The Roman Catholic Church is the only organisation to have realised that the progress of humanity is very slow, that the passing of a generation is an insignificant event in the history of the world. In the evolution of mankind the duration of the individual is inadequate as a unit of temporal measure. The advent of scientific civilisation necessitates a fresh discussion of all fundamental subjects. We are witnessing our own moral, intellectual, and social failure. We have been living under the delusion that democracies would survive through the weak and short-sighted efforts of the ignorant. We begin to understand that they are decaying. Problems involving the future of the great races demand a solution. It is now imperative to prepare for distant events, to mould young generations with a different ideal. The government of nations by men who estimate time in function of their own duration leads, as well we know, to confusion and to failure. We have to stretch our temporal outlook beyond ourselves.

On the contrary, in the organisation of transitory social groups, such as a class of children, or a gang of workmen, individual time alone must be taken into ac- count. The members of a group are obliged to work at the same

rhythm. The intellectual activity of school children composing a class must be of practically the same standard. In factories, banks, stores, universities, etc., the workers are supposed to accomplish a certain task in a certain time. Those whose strength declines on account of age or illness impede the progress of the whole. So far, human beings are classified according to their chronological age. Children of the same age are placed in the same class. The date of retirement is also determined by the age of the worker. It is known, however, that the true condition of an individual does not depend on his chronological age. In certain types of occupation, individuals should be grouped according to physiological ages. Puberty has been used as a way of classifying children in some New York schools.

But they are still no means of ascertaining at what time a man should be pensioned. Neither is there any general method of measuring the rate of the organic and mental de- cline of a given individual. However, physiological tests have been developed by which the condition of a flyer can be accurately estimated. Pilots are retired according to their physiological, and not their chronological age.

Young and old people, although in the same region of space, live in different temporal worlds. We are inexorably separated by age from one another. A mother never succeeds in being a sister to her daughter. It is impossible for children to understand their parents, and still less their

grandparents. Obviously, the individuals belonging to four successive generations are profoundly hetero-chronic. An old man and his great-grandson are complete strangers. The shorter the temporal distance separating two generations, the stronger may be the moral influence of the older over the younger. Women should be mothers when they are still very young. Thus they would not be isolated from their children, by a temporal gap too great to be bridged, even by love.

From the concept of physiological time, derive certain rules of our action on human beings. Organic and mental developments are not inexorable. They can be modified, in some measure, according to our will, because we are a movement, a succession or superposed patterns in the frame of our identity. Although man is a closed world, his outside and inside frontiers are open to many physical, chemical, and psychological agents. And those agents are capable of modifying our tissues and our mind. The moment, the mode, and the rhythm of our interventions depend on the structure of physiological time. Our temporal dimension extends chiefly during childhood when minds are plastic. Their formation can effectively be aided. As organic events happen each day in great numbers, their growing mass can receive such shape as it seems proper to impress permanently upon the individual. The moulding of the organism ac- cording to a selected pattern must take into account the nature of duration, the

constitution of our temporal dimension. Our interventions have to be made in the cadence of inner time. Man is like a viscous liquid flowing into the physical continuum. He cannot instantaneously change his direction. We should not endeavour to modify his mental and structural form by rough procedures, as one shapes a statue of marble by blows of the hammer. Surgical operations alone produce in tissues sudden alterations which are beneficial. And still, recovery from the quick world of the knife is slow. No profound changes of the body as a whole can be obtained rapidly. Our action must blend with the physiological processes, substratum in inner time, by following their own rhythm. For instance, it is useless to administer to a child a large quantity of cod-liver oil in a single dose. But a small amount of this remedy, given each day for several months, modifies the dimensions and the form of the skeleton. Likewise, the mental factors act only in a progressive manner. Our interventions in the building up of body and consciousness have their full effects only when they conform to the laws of our duration.

A child may be compared to a brook, which follows any change in its bed. The brook persists in its identity, in spite of the diversity of its forms. It may be- come a lake or a torrent. Under the influence of environ- ment personality may spread and become very thin, or concentrate and acquire great strength. The growth of personality involves a constant trimming of our self. At the beginning of life man

is endowed with vast potentialities. He is limited in his development only by the extensible frontiers of his ancestral predispositions. But at each instant he has to make a choice. And each choice throws into nothingness one of his potentialities. He has of necessity to select one of the several roads open to the wanderings of his existence, to the exclusion of all others. Thus he deprives himself of seeing the countries wherein he could have travelled along the other roads. In our infancy we carry within ourselves numerous virtual beings, who die one by one. In our old age we are surrounded by an escort of those of our great potentialities. Every man is a fluid that becomes solid, a treasure that grows poorer, a history in the making, a personality that is being created. And our progress or our disintegration depends on physical, chemical, and physiological factors, on viruses and bacteria, on psychological influences, and, finally, on our own will. We are constantly being made by our environment and by our self. And duration is the very material of organic and mental life, as it means "invention, creation of forms, continual elaboration of the absolutely new."

THE PRINCIPLE OF RIGHT

THINKIN

You might make and let loose a star to roll in its or- bit, and yet you have not done so memorable a thing in the eyes of God, as one who lets go a golden-orbed thought to roll through generations of time! Perhaps we are prone to underestimate the value of what we are thinking about, which is partly owing to the circumstance that the world has yet to see the wonderful things that may be accomplished through this great agency-thought. It seems that of all that concerns man, this subject has been so far the least treated of in regard to its significance. Therefore it is well that every one of us search as deeply as possible for definite suggestions as to the particular line along which true thought can be attained.

In the present day world amidst the ruins of decay- ing systems of thought, we catch glimpses of new light stirring in the hearts of earnest men and women and probably very soon this ruling power of thought will be better understood, which tantamount to saying that our relation with the basic principle Truth, of which we are representatives, will be perceived and acknowledged. Great indeed are the results of this subtle force extending as it does from the most trifling to the most important pursuits of life, and to the extent to which it is spiritualised, does it become more cogent and more intense. Noble

thoughts shed a flood of light on our lives, bringing out exalted character, purifying our intellectual powers, transforming our spiritual nature, gradually connecting them to the spirit within, and all that is true and beautiful. This declaration will in no sense be found extravagant, if we remember the essential fact that thoughts are constructive, the forerunner of our deeds: hence, good thoughts will produce all that is good and strong, uniting one by an invisible chain to kindred spirits, who act and react on each other. Similarly wrong thoughts return like boomerangs, producing disunion and discord.

As we all know that only one kind of thought can possess us at one time, we should awaken to the necessity of checking the growth of delusive and undesirable ideas, immediately expelling them, by substituting good for bad, setting up harmonious currents which are capable of producing abundant sympathetic conditions. Just as body grows vigorous through proper exercise, in the same way does virtuous, honest thought gain increased power through use of its capacities. Every one of us possesses abundant energy for thought power; the problems are, how should it be directed, and what is the ultimate object at which we would aim. It is very necessary that we should direct our efforts to right thinking, for the mental attitude we hold when we seek to work affects our relative success or failure. Only when we have mastered the secret of thought power, the true determining factor of life, we may

carry into our outer life the embodiment of our highest ideals.

Thought control therefore must be acquired by concentration and receptivity to thought is of primary importance to true advancement. The principle is simple, and its application is easy, only we should be sincere in our efforts to carry it into effect. The principle of right thinking consists in disengaging one subject from the distracting stream of every varying thought, and dwelling in that alone, letting in that enlightenment which finally leads us to become one with the highest Self. Regular thought training tends to this development and enables us to arouse the higher vibrations of thought, the most powerful of all the invisible forces.

When our lives are guided by a sound and under- stood principle, our actions will be self-sufficient and effective. Even under adverse circumstances, when things press heavily upon us, we can rise above all anxiety and gloom by the help of such a principle, as the bravest and noblest men and women of all ages have done. Now, if we would learn to do this, we must first deal with the within, before we can effectively deal with the without. Mental worries, forebodings and troublesome thoughts have a tendency to scatter, weaken and disorganise the powers of mind and inner vibratory forces. It is only drawing on the higher Self that the mind is strengthened. All things take their character from the internal state of the spirit. It is im-

possible to experience good and bad or to be in heaven or hell externally as a place without being in it internally as a state.

The ancient Rishis were seers of thought and exhibited phases of spirituality and wisdom quite unparalleled in any age. In meditation they were dexterous in effacing restlessness of their thought, reaching that fixity of mind by which the plane of Divine Consciousness is reached. Hence it is no surprise that these men, strong in their beliefs, and able to direct their range of vision to the invisible world, finding their lives in the realms of highest truth, feel their religion so strengthening and elevating. They carried conviction to members of their fellow men, for they believed with a belief which was not so much a faith as a certainty of absolute knowledge, that the Supreme Being, the innermost in the very core of things, was felt by them in the depths of their hearts as the life of their life and breath of their breath. This claim has been made by Yogis for long ages, and in their unique position the verification of their god-like attainments is entirely conclusive of the strange things ascribed to their sight and hearing, and of the bliss transcending human thought, into which they merge. When the intellect is purified, the whole nature becomes purified. When the whole nature has been purified, the memory becomes firm. And when memory of the Self remains firm, then all the ties, which bind us to a belief in anything but the Self, are loosened. Such ideas

have permeated, necessarily, slowly amongst men, but as spirituality increases, there is hope, that people will become more receptive. Nevertheless, very few have the power of sinking their own personality in an ideal one, for this is the highest and rarest gift.

The chief function of thought is to quicken the sensibilities of the spirit within us, to urge it to a new creative effort, to stimulate us to bring human life more into unison with the truth. Moreover, the immutable law in nature that each atom in the universe must serve an universal end, eternally prevails and cannot be permanently set aside by man. Let this fact inspire our hearts with noble purposes, and let us apply these truths to the efforts that will enable us to live for our best, to be earnest and capable workers for the service of the world. Let us kindle the hearts of men with the same lofty aims, and help other souls whose environments do not give them the same advantages, to sur- mount their ignorance and its attendant weakness. In our efforts to interlink ourselves with the law of Oneness, we should remember that one or its basic principles is service, and a sure test of our own ability and sincerity of purpose, is shown by consecrating our lives to the service of some other parts of the one great whole, that we may become living representatives of our Divine Origin.

We should keep the inner activities of our lives ever flowing with love, mingling love and Truth-because love's vibrations are, through the thoughts of man, the renewing

agents of Truth's almighty power. We cannot exert great influence unless we live the life of love, of boundless pity and compassion for our fellowmen. With tenderest love in our souls and affinitive thoughts vibrating towards all creatures, we can so much better take our position as servers of mankind, comprehencing the immensity of our real nature, estimating its value and wisdom, and seeing all in the One True Self, and the One Self in all. Prashna Upanishad says: "Who verily knows the unfading One in whom the knowing self, with all the directing intelligence, the senses and the elements nestle, He the all-knowing enters indeed into all."

An individual is never more nor less than what his thought is. The outer visible man is the product of the in- ner invisible thought. Thought can take you up. Before a man does right or wrong through his sense or motor-im- pulse in his mind has done it. The outer man always follows the inner operation of thought the subtle always moves the gross. The man is always moved by something invisible called force and the force within man called thought makes or unmakes everything in the world including the man himself. A man does auspicious or wrong things with his sense or motor-impulse after the fly-wheel of thought has set them in motion, in a particular way. A thought takes up a man and he is in time in the gutter; again a man taking up a thought is on the crest of Everest. If the thought is one of flaming love for mankind and through man to God, he will

give away even his life for God as if it were a trifle. Thought is, of course, very difficult to control and operate. Once he can master thought, he can master all inimical forces of the world and all situations of life, as far as he himself is concerned, for the world or thought will not operate on him anymore. So, for an aspirant it is of utmost importance to learn how to control and operate thought and one of the means is singing the Lord's Name, Nama Sankirtan.

Man ought always to pray. This does not mean that we go around with folded hands, but that we let our- selves live in awareness of prayer by means of doing Sankirtan, Bhajan, meditation, etc., as far as we possibly can. This is prayer in the true sense of the word. No mat- ter what we are doing or where we are, we can be in a consciousness of prayer. I am sure that each one of us has a particular need, challenge or experience that one feels that he should overcome in order that he might live a fuller, richer and more abundant life. How are we going to bring about that which is needed and desired in our life? It can be done through prayer power in us. This however does not eliminate intellectual steps which we can take to establish the good of God in our lives. The intellect prepares the way and precedes the coming of the spiritual realisation within our being. When man prays, he speaks affirmative words and this is using the mind. There is power in prayer and we have the right to pray in the particular chosen direction needing fulfilment. People are becoming more aware of

the importance and necessity of prayer. Because through prayer we get reconnected with something that are higher and deeper than we consciously felt before. The answers, solutions and fulfilments exist in God. We may have walls to go over, barriers to go through, or unbeliefs, fears and resentments to overcome so as to arrive at the place we desire our goal of life. Prayers cross all barriers and takes us there. Prayer is communions, it is our affirmative state of consciousness. Prayer is communion or atonement with that which we desire to experience in our lives. One of the means is prayer which is easier, and within the scope of one and all is Namasankirtan, singing the Lord's Name which elevates your thoughts of sublime heights.

Everyone who stops to think about life, and to reflect on its nature and meaning, will be led to see that there is a Power and a Presence greater than we are. It matters not what in what area of human activity and experience we wish to analyse, always there will be the realisation that, while we discover and interpret the universe each in our own way, it was there before we became aware of it. Again we may reflect and realise that, while decision is declared to be what it is by virtue of our own understanding, the human Self-conscious phenomenon is not itself of our own making, nor the nature of the gift indicative of nature of the Giver, since both, are one. If you ponder over this idea, you will agree that because the Giver and the gift are one, it is within our possibility of comprehension to discover

something of the nature of that Power that is greater than we are, in whom we live, move and have our being.

Man is God's organ of expression! Unless we become aware of the central desire of our being, we shall be failing both ourselves and the Infinite One who brought us here. If you and I do not respond this God-call in our hearts, we shall be missing a great opportunity for self-growth. God does not force you, but he is constantly calling in your heart. If you will only listen, if you will put aside the lesser desires of the outer world, this central demand for spiritual unfoldment will become clearer in our consciousness. Let us be more responsive to this call. Let us know that there is nothing too good to be true and that call of the Infinite in our hearts will inevitably be realised. The supreme ideal is God ideal. To know that your life is an inlet and outlet for the great ocean of supply in the mind of God is indeed to be fearless and free. So many people feel that they must get their supply from some other person or some situation objective to themselves. A poverty stricken person is one who thinks his good is outside himself. All wealth is within ourselves. We only pour it out in new ideas, in loving service, in common sense adaptations to the needs of other people. Our supply comes flow- ing back to us as a definite return for that which we have given. Therefore turn to God for new ideas, knowing that all power is within you to bring into expression that which is of value to others. Do not expect some miracle to drop wealth and

comfort into your lap, and do not form the habit of depending upon any individual for your supply. But turn to God constantly, knowing that He will pour through you such a rich abundance of substances, of ideas, of the spirit of service to others that there shall be no doubt of your ability to coin the substance of His and your inner being into wealth which will meet your every need in the outer life. The outer experience with things, activities or people and different changing situations usually presents a chal- lenge to each of us. We have no right to complain that it is so, and that is the situation which man has always faced. Because our personal and limited mentality are sometimes depressed and bewildered by the events which come hurrying towards us from the outer world and we must make our contact and realise an union with the mind of the infinite good. Through this unity with God we may unfailingly draw from limitless reservoir of Infinite Power.

Life of righteousness has to contain within itself universal wisdom and intelligence. The perfect patterns of laws and order that make sciences possible, presupposes an infinite and reliable intelligence, whose sustain- ing timeless activity knows no limits. By this same wisdom in us we are able to gain an ever increasing under- standing of life. Without the first, the second would be im- possible. Beyond wisdom, the nature of God must be love, for unless life is interested in bringing into being, sustain- ing and perfecting the awareness of its own individualisations, why

should it create in the first place? We are the results of God's activity in our present dimension of living, and our realm of freedom seems limitless. But our own errors of belief and opinion prevents us from understanding that its nature is Love. The cosmic function- ing of life also requires harmony. Harmony is dynamic, hence more than the absence of conflict, but it is latter also.

Conflict never can sustain cosmos. Within the divine Consciousness, one interest cannot violate another and produce a perfect result-the nature of God is also Peace. Therefore man who is in quest of Truth has to strive for the qualities of infinite Good, Love and Peace.

A sage or a man of wisdom is indeed a sure guarantee for a society's life and strength. Whatever may be the drawbacks and evils of our present-day society, is it not a wonder that they are so few considering the suffering we as a nation have gone through for the past few centuries. The wise and saintly law-givers of old have permanently moulded the character of our society and through their sincere efforts and foresight we have survived. How could it be otherwise, when we hold as dear not desire and selfish- ness but renunciation and divinity for our ideals. And in what words could those noble sages and saints of old be praised, who in a world of selfishness and wisdom to chose renunciation and divinity as their ideals. The secret of success of the saints in their undertakings is that they do nothing for themselves, and even doing, they do

not do. The saint never thinks that he does a thing, because 'he' no longer exists for him. He is one with the Atman, the Self, al- ways actionless. In his view there is really nothing done and much less does he crave for fruits of his actions. This is the spirit in which saints do their duties. Through the saints God shines in the world. Of course, God manifests Himself through all, but our selfishness and egoism sup- press that manifestation as dark clouds hide the sun, but these being absent in a saint, he is God himself and what- ever he does is truly the work of God. Such have been and are the qualities, the extent, the far reaching and lasting results of their activities of this earth.

Freedom from the trials and tribulations of this earthly existence is a possibility when we accept the fact that where there is pain there is also love; where there is love there is help; where there is help there is hope; where there is hope there is life; and where there is life, there is freedom. Evidently the cycle is not broken by pains, it is rather completed.

In Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, we have a saint of the calibre of the old Rishi type, and his life, it may be said, is a commentary on the high ideals of self- less service, love and goodness, who by his mission in life holds aloft a blazing torch of righteous living to aspirants in particular and his admirers and well-wishers in general to keep in mind, the facts, the principles and the lessons indicated by the Swamiji's life and doings with a sense of gratitude for

the invaluable benefits conferred by him to all people. Let all aspirants, as far as possibly can, exert themselves to study, assimilate his life and teachings and make them to the best of their ability, the working principles of their daily life and attain the real freedom, viz., the Goal of Life.

The Sixtieth Birthday celebration is a sacred occasion. My prayer on the occasion is dedicate yourselves afresh to the teachings and mission of Swamiji and to the ideals lived by him. Give your thoughts to his message of peace, service, good-will, of unselfish love towards all beings, of purification and refinement of your nature, of cultivation of all that is positive and desirable and effacement of all that is crude, coarse and impure in thought, word and deed.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

THE WORLD PHENOMENA-A

CHANGE ONLY IN NAME AND FORM

Let us fancy, and fancying has been our nature since the world began, that the great Rishi Vyasa comes back to our midst to have a look at the twentieth century civilisation. Doubtless, there would be much which he could not make out, much which he in his good old days, would not have even dreamt of. Especially, if he were to go to Russia, Europe, England or America, he will see things, which if he were an ordinary man, might boundlessly excite his curiosity and interest. The ocean-going liners, ploughing the seas, the busy air traffic of nations, the huge workshops and manufactories which form the leading future of the day; electric trains, televisions, electronic devises and other vast and wonderful inventions and contrivances of the age-what will Vyasa think of these? Supposing he is led to one of the industrial exhibitions of the day, will he not get stupefied with wonder? The answer is not very likely. All the machines and manufactories of the world and all the wonderful inventions of the age will hardly succeed in eliciting from him a word of surprise; and if an enthusiastic scientist were to speak him of the fairy tales of science and spread before him the visions of the wonders that would be heavens filling with comets, pilots of the purple twilight sky dropping down with costly bales, and the parliament of man, the federations of the nations of the world, he might smile, smile and say, What if these be? These are no

wonders, you are but children. Even if all the stars in heaven were made by the sheer might of man to shine in the day, and he were enabled to cross from the earth to moon, from moon to Mars, from Mars to Venus as easily as from one room of the house to another; nay even if he were to make ten thousand new stars and launch them all into space, it is not likely that the philosophic calmness of our Vyasa would be disturbed with curiosity and wonder. If any one were to ask whether or not the world has become better than what it was then in olden-days, he would laugh and say, 'What do you take the world to be? It is in essence the Supreme Self, the Atman, changeless and eternal, shining through a vast variety of conditions (Upadhis) created by Maya (energy). Maya is constant and so your world neither grows nor decays. But this Maya, these Upadhis and this world are only the dreams of the ignorant. To the wise all that is, is God; yes, all that is, is God.

What could Vyasa mean? The Upanishads say: He who dwelling in the earth is within the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body is the earth, who within rules the earth is thy soul, the Inner ruler, Immortal....

It is the one and the same Self that is in the earth, in the waters, in the fire, in man, in the animal, in the plant, in the stone, in the fire, in the wind and so on; but it is in them under extremely different conditions. Man is different from the animal as such, the animal is different from the plant as such, the plant is different from the stone as such,

the fire is different from the wind as such, but as pure Existence, man, animal, plant, wind, stone and fire are all one. All things that are, ipso facto, have this element of Existence and this Existence is not a mere dead one, for the whole world is instinct and bristling with life. The stone that lies as dead is really not so, for it has a life and consciousness peculiar to itself. It is this underlying existence, this ultimate inner life and consciousness pervading all through the universe which is called the Self. Under certain conditions (Upadhis as they are called) it appears as a man, under others as an animal, plant, stone and so on. As man you are different from the woman, but as a human being you are one with the woman; as a man you are different with the animal, but as a living being man, woman, animal, plant, are all one, and as Existence you are one with the whole Universe. That existence is God, the ultimate unity in the universe; in Him we are all one. This community manifests itself in an infinite variety of conditions and forms of what are called the universe. All the endless difference which we see are difference only of conditions, of circumstances. Indeed, the world is nothing but a mass of conditions, superimposed upon the Self, and creation means nothing more than the superimpositions of these conditions, or, to speak from a different standpoint, the manifestations of these conditions, Now, as the totality of these conditions makes up what is seen as the world, the energy or power (Sakti or Maya) through which they

become manifest is the sum total of the energy in the universe. This sum total, science assures us, is a constant quantity. Science has conclusively established that the quantity of the energy in the world is constant quantity, viz., it cannot be less one day and greater another. As our philosophers put it in their usual poetic form, the consort of the Lord-Parvati, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kali as she is called, is though she has given births to children innumerable and worlds innumerable, yet a young maiden, Kanya. What follows? The Self or God is beyond growth or decay; so also is Sree, viz., the energy which creates the diverse conditions through which the Self shines. It is obvious, therefore that the world which is combination of the Self and Sree, Prakriti and Purusha, is incapable of progress and decay. It cannot be better one day and worse on another. All that is possible is only a change. The energy in it may be latent at one time and manifest at another. The energy in the seed, for instance, is latent, that of the tree is manifest; and when the tree springs forth from the seed and grows, the energy in the world does not increase, no new thing is brought into it; there is simply a change of conditions. The world as a whole neither improves nor declines. What were once seed, earth, air, water, now combines together to form a tree, and similarly when the tree is pulled down and cut up into chairs, tables and benches, what really happens is simply a change of conditions. What was before of the form of a tree and called as such, is now changed in form

and is called a table, a chair or a bench as the case may be. There is change only in name and form. Or to put the same thing in another way, the new thing is in essence the same as the old, but posterior in time, is different in size and shape, viz., in space, and as a few more links in the chain of causation in other words, it is different from the former in space, time and causality. So again in the building of a huge skyscraper, in the construction of supersonic air-engine, or an electronic device, in the building of a new city, in the demolition of an old castle, all that really happens is but a change in time, space and causality-neither improvement nor decay so far as the totality of the world is concerned.

That there is nothing new under the sun is a profound piece of philosophy. Only it does not go far enough. There is nothing new under the sun and beyond the sun. Continents became oceans, oceans became continents, mountains became seas, and seas became mountains, mammoths died and man sprang up did the world improve or decline? It did neither. All that really happened was only a change in conditions, a change in name and form, a change in time, space and causality. So again in the organisations of joint stock companies, in the building of huge manufactories, in the vast and wonderful mechanical contrivances of the age; in the jet engines, in the tube-trains, in the ocean liners and the thoughts that shake mankind-in short, in all that goes by the name of modern civilisation, there has been only change and not improvement, so far as the

totality of the world is concerned; the world as a whole has neither got better nor worse. All our civilisation is nothing, really speaking, but a change in name and form, a change in time, space and causality.

But is this change at least absolutely real? There might not have been any change or improvement, but has there been at least a real change? No, is the reply from the West and East alike. Time, space and causality, says Emanual Kant, are merely forms of the mind. The name and form of the pot are not in the clay, but in your mind, says Sri Sankaracharya. They are not where the mind is not manifest. The mind, then is kind of spectacles; when you look through them, the world appears bound down and diversified with the conditions of time, space and causality, the innumerable names and forms, just as to the jaundiced eyes everything appears yellow. It is given to man, and here is his highest privilege to leave behind this differentiating mind to remove at will the spectacle-like mechanism, as it were, which creates this world of names and forms, and soar into the regions of pure un- conditioned consciousness. In that blissful state of halcyon rest and calmness, the waves of names and forms die, and there is neither caste nor creed, neither jet engines, nor televisions, neither animal nor man, neither mountain nor sea, neither male nor female, neither death nor life, neither heaven nor hell. All these immense worlds, all our glorious civilisation and all the innumerable differences

that attract and repel by turns, all vanish; and what remains is the pure and unconditioned, eternal and blissful Self, the Atman or God.

It is said that there is a kind of magic oil and that when a lamp is fed with it and lit, the whole area illumined by its light at once appears covered with a multitude of ugly snakes crawling and creeping over one another. The dreadful vision continues, until all the oil is consumed; and no one that sees it, can unless he knows the secret, ever take it for a vision. The mind can be compared to that magic oil. It has been steadily presenting to us that we, not knowing the secret, have been mistaking it for all eternal reality and got hopelessly terrified at. To him that knows the secret, there is no fear.

All this world, this infinitely differentiated world together with the improvements, as they are called, which have been introduced into it, is found to be a phantasmagoria, presented by the magic lantern of the mind, a mere hallucination and flies away like a dream after waking, when the great and profound secret of the self is known and realised. A certain Brahmin performed a great sacrifice in honour of Indra, and the latter pleased with him, asked what he wanted. The avaricious Brahmin asked for the Kalpaka tree-the most favourite tree of Indra, and the request was granted. The tree had one most remarkable property, and that was, whatever the Brahmin thought in his mind actually came to pass. The Brahmin thought that

it would be better for him to have wealth, and at once there came in abundant gold and silver. AII these things happened so rapidly that the poor Brahmin thought they might all of them, including the tree be a mere dream and pass away, and so it was at once....The mind is such a Kalpaka tree. It presents to us just such a vision as we want or wanted before, the world is beautiful and pleas- ant, ugly or miserable and we are happy or unhappy just as the mind chooses. It is a very wonderful tree, this mind, and when we question its reality, and the reality of things it gives us, the whole vision passes away and we find we have been dreaming.

Absolutely speaking then all our civilisation, the triumphs of science, politics and philosophy, the glories of agriculture, industry and commerce, are all dreams from which we are all bound to awake some time or other-a conclusion not perhaps very palatable to some but truth is truth for all that.

MY RECIPE FOR INDIA'S

REGENERATION

I am firmly convinced that no good comes out of the man who, day in and day out, thinks that he is no- body. If a man always thinks he is miserable, low and nothing, nothing he becomes. If you say, yea, yea-'I am, I am' so shall you be; and if you say, 'I am not', think that you are not, and day and night meditate upon that fact that you are nothing, aye, nothing shall you be. That is the great fact which you ought to remember.

We are the children of the Almighty, we are sparks of the infinite, divine fire. How can we be nothing? We are everything, ready to do everything, we can do every- thing, and man must do everything.

This faith in themselves was in the hearts of our ancestors, this faith in themselves was the motive power that pushed them forward in the march of civilisation, and if there has been degeneration, if there has been de- feat, mark my words, you will find that degradation to have started on the day our people lost faith in them- selves. Losing faith in one's self means losing faith in God. Do you believe in that infinite, good providence working in and through you? If you believe that this Omnipresent One, the Antaryamin is present in every atom, is through and through, Ota-Prota, as the Sanskrit word goes penetrating your body, mind and soul, how can you lose heart?

I may be a little bubble of water, and you may be a mountain-high wave. Never mind! The infinite ocean is the background of me as well as of you. Mine is also that infinite ocean of life, of power, of spirituality, as well as yours. I am already joined from my very birth, from the very fact of my life-I am in Yoga, with that infinite life, and infinite goodness, and infinite power, as you are, mountain-high though you may be. Therefore teach this life-saving, great, ennobling, grand doctrine to your children, even from their very birth.

You need not teach them Advaitism; teach them Dvaitism, or any 'ism' you please, but we have seen that this is the common, 'ism' all through India; this marvellous doctrine of the soul, the perfection of the soul, commonly believed in by all sects.

As says our great philosopher Kapila, if purity has not been the nature of the soul, it can never attain purity afterwards, for anything that was not perfect by nature, even if it attained to perfection, that perfection would go away again.

If impurity is the nature of man, then man will have to remain impure, even though he may be pure for five minutes. The time will come when this purity will be washed out, pass away, and the old natural impurity will have its sway once more.

Therefore, say all our philosophers, good is our nature, perfection is our nature, not imperfection, not im- purity and we should remember that. Remember the beautiful example of the great sage who, when he was dying, asked his mind to remember all his mighty deeds and all his mighty thoughts. There you do not find that he was teaching his mind to remember all weaknesses and all his follies.

Follies there are, weakness there must be, but re- member 'Real nature' always-that is the only way to cure your weakness, that is the only way to cure the follies.

Let me tell you as one who has been working-at least trying to work,-all his life, that there is no regeneration for India until you be spiritual. Not only so, but upon it depends the welfare of the whole world. For I must tell you frankly that the very foundations of materialism, rather Western civilisation have been shaken to their base.

The mighty buildings, if built upon the loose sand foundations of materialism, must come to grief one day, must totter to their destruction some day.

The history of the world is our witness. Nation after nation has arisen, and based its greatness upon materialism, declaring man was all matter. Aye, in Western language, a man gives up the ghost, but in our language a man gives up his body.

The Western man is a body first, and then he has a soul; with us a man is a soul and spirit, and he has a body. Therein lies a world of difference.

All such civilisations, therefore, as have been based such sand foundations as material comforts and all that, have disappeared one after the other, after short lives, from the face of the world; but the civilisation of India and the other nations that have stood at India's feet to listen and learn, namely, Japan and China live even to the present day, and there are signs even of revival among them.

Their lives are like that of the Phoenix, a thousand time destroyed but ready to spring up again more glorious.

But a materialistic civilisation once dashed down, never can come up again; that building once thrown down is broken into pieces once for all. Therefore have patience and wait, the future is in store for us. Do not be in hurry, do not go out to imitate anybody else. This is another great lesson we have to remember; imitation is not civilisation. I may deck myself into a Raja's dress; but will that make me a Raja'? An ass in a lion's skin never makes a lion. Imitation, cowardly imitation, never makes for progress. It is verily the sign of awful degradation in a man. Aye, when a man has begun to hate himself, then the last blow has come. When a man has begun to be ashamed of his ancestors, the end has come.

Here I am, yet proud of my race, Hindu race, proud of my nation, proud of my ancestors. I am proud that I am a countryman of yours, you the descendants of the sages, you the descendents of the most glorious Rishis the world ever saw. Therefore have faith in yourself, be proud of your ancestors, instead of being ashamed of them.

And do not imitate; do not imitate. Whenever you are under the thumb of others, you lose your own independence. If you are working even in spiritual things, at the dictation of others, slowly you lose all faculty even of thought. Bring out through your own exertions what you have, but do not imitate, yet take what is good from others. We have to learn from others.

You put the seed in the ground, and give it plenty of earth, air and water to feed upon; when the seed grows into a plant, and then into a gigantic tree, does it become the earth, does it become the air, does it become the water? It becomes the mighty plant, the mighty tree after its own nature, having absorbed everything that was given to it. Let that be your position.

We have indeed many things to learn from others; yea, that man who refuses to learn is already dead.

ATMAN A CONCEPT

The entry of the individual into the Absolute is characterised by the highest type of intuition or Sakshatkara. It is not a perception of a cognition in the ordinary sense of the term but a super normal experience where the knowledge of what is known is given, not in the form of a generality but in particularity. There is a Sutra of Patanjali on this subject. Intuition differs from scriptural or verbal testimony, or inference by the specific feature of particularised knowledge of object. We have generality of knowledge or universal in the particular. By an act of comparison and correlation and connection of one thing with another perceptual and cognitional activity takes place so that we cannot have knowledge of one thing independently of another thing. Hence, logical knowledge is defective and so is also scientific knowledge. All observation is a kind of logic applied in perception of objects. We have a sensation of things, a kind of perceptual inference of things. This sensation is carried to our functional apparatus by which we have a perceptual knowledge. Then we have a conceptual knowledge and this is the final step where a judgment is taken by the inner structure which knows the objects and relates it to other things. To know anything and to relate it with others is not absolute knowledge. The intellect should not act as a judge, taking information from various sources and understand things. But in the intuition of the absolute no such thing will

do. It is not real knowledge where one thing is in relation to other things. A thing in itself is different from what it is in relation to others. This is inference of the objects as located in space and time, and not intuition. Sensory perception and inferential logic do not give us the specialised knowledge of objects, but give us knowledge only as presented in space and time which are not its essential nature but it's name and form. Hence we are said to be in a world of Nama and Rupa and not in Satchidananda. There is no world but only space and time. So what do you know of the world in terms of the senses? The difference between us and the world is never bridged through sense perception. But intuition is quite different because of the specialised knowledge you ac- quire of the objects. Krishna speaks here of intuition of the Absolute. There are varieties of intuition but this intuition of the Absolute is neither of a distant object, nor of past, present or future intuitions. Sakshatkara means immediate realisation of Absolute. Immediate does not mean just now as in ordinary meaning. In philosophy immediate means non-mediate or non-mediacy. The sort of link artificially made between us and the object is mediacy. The mediacy of intuition is such that there is no link between the seen and seer, between the object and the subject, between the consciousness of the seer and object outside but a direct communion of the seer and object in a manner which the intellect cannot understand. It is not like a person

embracing another person. By embracing a person there is no link or communion or possession because of the intervention of space and time. Intuition is a communion transcending space and time. This cannot be understood. It is experience and there ends the matter. It is a purely personal experience in the sense that the consciousness does not objectify itself. How does the individual commune with the Absolute? We have already seen that it is like a river entering ocean. It is not contact of one thing with another. It is a union of the essence of the Jiva with the essence of the cosmos. It is not contact not also one thing qualifying another. Individual is not also a quality of the absolute. In quality it is not the same thing as the object. The blueness of the lotus is the same as the lotus. So inherence is also defective as contact, though this is nearer than the former. Then what sort of relationship exists? Even in inherence there is a conceptual difference though not a perceptual difference as in contact. It is union of essence with essence.

What happens to a person who has this intuition? We cannot see intuition as such but only its effect in a person who has it. So the characteristics of a person who has this are explained.

As the Atman was recognised in the objects and the essence of the objects were recognised in the Atman, Brahman is recognised in Atman and Atman in Brahman and simultaneously the unity of Brahman in objects. This is

a commentary on 'Sarvam Kalvidam Brahma'. Sankaracharya has explained this in detail. What is meant by 'All' (Sarvam)? What are the things in which it is seen? What is 'I'? What is Brahman? Is the multitudinous of objects seen in Brahman implying the seeing of Brahman in the multitude? It is not variety or multiplicity. But the indivisibility of Brahman is seen in objects. Variety is not carried to Absolute but the Absolute is brought down to the level of variety. Instead of objects appearing as different because of space and time, they appear as one because of introduction of Brahman in them. Together with the perception of multiplicity there is a perception of an underground of unity. It is not that Atman is seen in objects of the world because the objects of the world include space and time. Space and time are also objects. Anything that is experienced by consciousness is object. Anything that stands outside the consciousness is object. It is consciousness that determines object. Anything that is not pure consciousness is object. When the subjective character of the Atman permeates the object and their determining factor (i.e., space and time) it is Isvara Drishti. I am seen in all things and all things are seen in Me is the meaning of the above. A merger of all variety in unity were they reveal a character of divinity instead of externality. Here there is no movement. Nothing in this world is lost to that person who has overcome personality and see things not in terms of space and time. We are not really separated

from other things of the cosmos though one form of the cosmos may be separated from another like one wave from the other. God never becomes invisible to such a person nor does God lose sight of him, because consciousness has attained consciousness.

There is no prescribed or pattern of attitude of conduct of a Yogin. There is no ethics or morality to Him because of their relationship with other things which do not exist for him. He who realises the supreme presence of this being in all things, such a person is always established in Me, whatever the way he lives in this world. All the branches of a tree are contained in the seed.

Just as there is no ethics that can apply to a Yogi, the law of aesthetics do not apply to him. No law of the relative world applies to him. Experience cannot be classified as pain or pleasure. What he undergoes is experience as such. We pass judgment and say pain or pleasure where there is mere experience. In fact experience cannot be called painful or pleasurable, a particular experience is what it is. If the constitution of a Jiva can reconcile itself with an experience it is called pleasurable experience. If there is a repulsion from its constitution there is painful experience. On account of incapacity of the Prarabdha Karma which manifests his psychophysical organism in a particular relation to the cosmic laws there is pain. To the Yogin who has overcome this bodily and mental organism there is pure experience, no pain or pleasure.

This teaching does not enter us though we have heard it many times because of egoism, of the opacity of the body and the intensity of the Prarabdha Karma. This teaching is 'do unto others what you wish others to do unto you'. The central point of goodness of conduct is: whether your conduct can be imitated with impunity by others and can be all right if done by others. If my conduct, attitude is to be imitated by others, is it all right? If so, you can go ahead. You are a point of the cosmos. This is the way of seeing by the Atman. How simple is this Dharma and how difficult to practise. Will I be happy if this attitude is meted out of me? So he who sees (not merely physical seeing but feels in the heart and experiences in consciousness) the substance of the Atman in the substance ofthings such a person has no pleasure or pain in the world.

BE EVER RESPONSIVE TO

THE CALL FROM WITHIN

The supreme ideal is God-ideal and man is God's organ of expression. Unless we become aware of the central desire of our being, we shall be failing both ourselves and the Infinite One who brought us here upon this earth. If we do not respond to this God-call in our hearts, we shall be missing a great opportunity for self-growth. God does not force you, but He is constantly calling in your heart. If we will but listen and put aside the lesser desires of the outer world, the central demand for spiritual unfoldment will come into clearer perspective. Let us be more responsive to this call from within. Turn to God often for new sublime ideas, knowing that all power is within you to bring into expression that which is of much value to others. The outer experience with things, activities, people and changing situations usually presents a challenge to each of us; and we have no right to complain that this is so. That is the way of the world and that is the situation which man al- ways faced. Because our personal and limited mentalities are more often depressed and bewildered by the events which come hurrying towards us from the outer world, we must make our contact and realise our union or oneness with the Mind of the infinite Good. Through this unity with God we may unfailingly draw from the limitless reservoir of the Infinite power.

To know that your life is an inlet and outlet for the great ocean of supply in the Mind of God is indeed to be free and peaceful. But many people feel that they must get their supply from some other person or some situation objective to themselves. A man of poverty is one who thinks that his good is outside of himself. All wealth is within ourselves and we pour it out in sublime ideas, in loving solace and in common-sense adaptations to the needs of other people. Our supply comes flowing back to us as a definite return for that which we have given. Because work or service is always subjective rather than objective, in helping or giving others, we really help ourselves and the converse cannot but be true, for we cannot help our- selves without at the same time helping others. This also applies in the earlier states of individual evolution, for instance, in Karma Yoga where the truth of this is self-evident, and it is no less true in the later stages of Bhakti, Yoga and Jnana.

It is truism that God works by means of us. It is said that God can do more for us when He can do through us. He indwells us as the spirit of confidence, courage, power, love and right action. The Lord is with us and for us, but we must provide the channel by which He works through us. We can provide this channel with our thoughts about God, about ourselves or about the situation around us. So we should keep the mind open and free for God's power to flow into our body, emotions and affairs. When we were born we cried for food, and when we grew older, we some at least

discovered that we could never be satisfied without receiving, in addition, spiritual food such as inspiration, guidance, knowledge and wisdom from the infinite Source, through the blessings of the Guru. The infinite life principle is seeking ex- pression through each of us and our love for God is impressed by our desire to feel mentally and spiritually united with the source of all blessings and all power. So let our mind and intellect be receptive to this sublime higher call and be guided by this.

If you find yourself worrying or becoming afraid of what will happen or how something will work out, then you should take to the idea of prayer-power. Prayer is one of the things which unmistakably paves the way for peace. Although many of man's efforts might not now be recognised as prayer, man has sought to contact a Supreme be- ing throughout the ages. Such a reaching out for a superior Consciousness was apparent when a true aspirant's re- quest to the preceptor to teach him to pray was made. For a true understanding of the request we may add the word 'effective'. Effective prayer originates in a peaceful heart and brings recognition of God as all-powerful. Intelligence which we can share as ever-present good, and as the personification of Love that is ever available. These realisations, however, cannot be forced or obtained by will-power or by intellect. They come to us through accep-tance and faith. Successful prayer acknowledges the true nature of our individual relationship

to the all-merciful Lord, which does not need much striving after, but which needs only to accept oneness without doubts or waverings. Let one prayerfully ask the Compassionate Lord to use one as a channel for carrying His Will into expression. May one be thankful for this feeling of oneness that comes with this attitude of doing things together the individual and his God. One can then know that this will reinforce one's practice of peace as nothing else can.

Human life is very precious and rare, as it is got after many births, passing through different species of existence; and as such we cannot and must not fritter away life. There is no certainty as to when we will be able to get this human birth again and so this life on hand must be utilised in striving to the best of our ability to follow the path chalked out by saints and men of wisdom to understand the ultimate truth beyond all this phenomenal existence. One should be ever vigilant and striving, in cultivating sublime virtues and controlling the mind and engage oneself in spiritual pursuits every moment of life. If not, we would have lived in vain.

May you all, by the blessings of the all-merciful Lord and by the grace of Satgurudev, understand the goal of human existence in this very life, is my prayer. God bless you all!

Hari Om Tat Sat.

THE CHARM THAT ATTRACTED ALL

Sri Swami Sivananda was a tall and broad-shouldered figure, with a well-proportioned body. He had a majestic and magnetic personality. He did not stoop when he walked, though he was well over seventy years. His face always beamed with smiles. Such was his great mental strength. Ever since he was a boy he had been active, in one way or the other, and working had become his second nature. Therefore, he went on unceasingly and untiringly working all through his life, for the welfare of humanity. Where the energy came from was known only to God who had chosen him as one of His representatives on earth.

Those who moved closely with him knew all his lovable qualities, and they were very many. The all-absorbing love that he had for all living creatures, including birds and animals, was the most outstanding trait in his nature. His disciples knew this and, therefore, were most free and unreserved in his presence. If they had any faults to confess, they were not afraid of placing them before him, because they knew that Master's love for them would be in no way affected. He would continue to be as kind and generous as he ever was. Swamiji would give them excellent advice and, what is more, further opportunities for mending themselves and getting rid of their weaknesses. If they failed again, he would excuse them again. His love for all made him lavish his gifts. When he gave anything, he gave most royally, whether it was given

to an inmate of the Ashram or a visitor from outside. Those who saw Swamiji for the first time would be stunned at the sight of such generosity, for perhaps, they would never have seen so generous a person before.

There are some personalities who have practised the art of preserving their temper and even of speaking most pleasantly. There is a difference however between others and Sivananda. Through every word and syllable of what he spoke, sincerity would shine forth. When most people speak, you will have a faint suspicion that they are desirous of being merely courteous or some- times you may even have a feeling that they want some service or help from you. You would never have such doubts when hearing Sivananda speak to you. The truth is that he did not want any favour from anyone. He knew that if anything was wanted by him for the purpose of carrying on his mission, God is ever ready to send the help that is needed.

It was everyone's belief that all his wants were looked after by God, which was also responsible for his lavishness in gifts. His feeling was that he was kept on the earth only to give everyone what God gave him. Other- wise, how can we explain the way in which he gave away books and periodicals and articles of value in such quantity to those who visited the Ashram? He distributed them to people because he felt that they would be valued and used by the recipients of the gifts. He had the intuitive ability to recognise the tastes and talents of people. A few seconds

scrutiny would enable him to judge facial contours and general appearance so as to gauge how far people would evolve spiritually. Recognising each one's fitness, he generously gave, and gave as his habit, generously. But the wonder of it all was that the more he gave, the more also he got from God to give. Perhaps the theory of economy in God's world is the opposite of what it is in our world; here is scarcity when a commodity is spent out, and there abundance seems to be the outcome of spending.

More than what he gave was the solicitude that he had for everyone who had come in contact with him. The person might be near or far away, but he would be never far away, from the mind of Swami Sivananda. If he was ill, the Swami would send a prayer to the Lord for his speedy recovery. Nay, he will not be satisfied with it. He would issue orders to the Ayurvedic Pharmacy to send a suitable parcel of medicines to the ailing one. He would also send a letter giving detailed instructions as to how to use the medicines and how to pray to God everyday. The envelope in which the letter went also contained some packets of the Temple Prasad. Where is the wonder, if these people sent letters of gratitude and be- came life-long devotees of the Swamiji? But it was not their devotion to him that Swamiji wanted, for he wanted that they should lead the life divine and get rid of all misery and trouble. If he felt that the spiritual ardour of such individuals got weakened, he would, from time to time, send them gifts of books and

pamphlets or tonics like Chyavanaprash, and the like. The main object was to make them more earnest and sincere in their efforts for spiritual progress. Even if the person was an agnostic or atheist or a rank materialist, he would not fail to realise how lovingly he was treated by Swamiji and even in ordinary gratitude he would be impelled to write for fresh books and go through them, too. The books of Swamiji were so written that they would certainly touch the heart of the reader, sometime. The much-needed transformation of the personality would take place and Swamiji would rejoice that one more soul had been retrieved.

It was not at all surprising that those who saw Swamiji at close quarters or even those who had at least once seen him developed a love, respect and unbreakable attachment towards him. But what was almost in-explicable was the way in which people who never had a chance of seeing him felt drawn towards him. Number- less were such people. Someone reads a story pamphlet of Swamiji somewhere and straightaway rushes to the Ashram and throws himself at the feet of the Master! It might be that it was only an act of impulse. But from observation, it was found that the impulse was followed by a continuing and never-breaking loyalty. There are many in the Ashram who came like this and never left it. They had received initiation into the order of Sannyasa and had rendered yeoman's service. When one thinks about these

happenings, one cannot help realising that God is working according to a plan and that He chose young people from far and wide and made them peruse some writings of Swamiji and filled them with an insatiable desire to reach the abode of bliss (Ananda Kutir). It was in such a way that almost all the best volunteers of the Ashram came to Swamji.

And how are we to explain the fact about the American, the German, the French and the English? The number of such people was steadily increasing. The Branches of The Divine Life Society outside India were getting to rise in number and the literature of the Society was spreading in foreign countries, more and more. But this cannot be the sole reason for large numbers of foreign visitors coming to the Ashram; for there was evidence to the contrary. There was a German lady who came and stayed at the Ashram, who said that she had been having an irrepressible inner urge to come to this place. We know the Swamiji did not come down to such tricks as hypnotism, etc. He was not the person to send thoughts asking anyone to come to him. His relationship to God was a true saint's. One of the devotees in the last century has sung: 'How can I ask even for liberation from births and deaths? If I do that, what sort of Bhakti (devotion) will be mine to you. O Lord?' The idea is that, at a certain stage, one does not ask anything from the Lord, except the Lord Himself. We should not exercise any thought about what work the Lord is to assign to us.

We shall find in actual practice that some work is assigned to us and we have to do it and rest contented. Ours is not to reason why, ours is but to do and die. This was the principle on which Swamiji was working. So, the German disciple who wanted to come here was ordained to do so. Perhaps she was chosen by God as an instrument through whom the good work of The Divine Life Society had to be continued in some part of Europe.

After sometime an Englishman stayed in the Ashram. He was sojourning for two months learning Raja Yoga, Hatha Yoga, etc. He was coming for the first time to India, but he had no desire to see any part of the country except the Ashram. He got into the plane and came straight here and flew back after two months of hard work. He had merely heard of Swami Sivananda from another Englishman who had come here a few months back. That was enough inducement for him to come and to stay. He became most loved by everyone in the Ashram.

The impressions that these foreign students took and spread wherever they went, were indicative of the influence that Swamiji's personal charm had upon them. Swamiji did not even talk much to them. He asked the usual questions as to whether they kept themselves healthy, whether they received proper attention in the Ashram, and so on. But the force or charm was not in the spoken word but in the unexpressed thought behind the word. He taught people by his own example. Indeed it is no

exaggeration to say that character is formed by the silent influence of examples which steals into one more than by the training which one actually receives. What is said teaches less than what is left unsaid.

A Raja Yogi can explain the indescribable charm of Swamiji that attracted all. When he spoke to someone, the person's mind was charged with the power that came from the Atman. Swamiji's mind contacted the mind of the listener who received the words with the force. That force of the nature of Bliss, because it is Sat-Chit-Ananda-the Bliss which cannot fail to please and render happy every listener. The same force went abroad with his thought and acted as the charm which attracted seekers for all times.

MANTRA AND JAPA

By constant repetition of Mantra, the aspirant imbibes the virtue and power of the Deity that presides over the Mantra. Mantras are in the form of praise and appeal to the Deity craving for help and mercy. Constant repetition of the Mantra with faith and devotion augments the Sakti or power of the aspirant, purifies and awakens the Mantra Chaitanya latent in the Mantra and bestows on the individual Mantra Siddhi, illumination, peace, freedom, happiness and sustained bliss. The power of sound is tremendous. Ideas are generated in the mind by the mere hearing of sounds. Every name has a form corresponding to it-Sabda and Artha are inseparable. The form related to a name is at once manifested in the mind the moment the name is heard by the ears and transmitted to the mental consciousness. God is the completion or fullness of existence. Hence the name which de- notes Him too is full and perfect. Therefore the power of the Name of God is incalculable because it is the height or zenith of power. The name of God can achieve anything, there is nothing impossible. Even as the name of a thing in this world generates the consciousness of that thing in the mind, the name of God generates God-consciousness in the purified mind and becomes the direct cause of the realisation of sustained happiness here and hereafter of the highest perfection or attainment of truth behind all phenomenal existence. The Japa of Mantra can bring the realisation of

his Sankalpa even though he has no knowledge of the meaning of the Mantra. But only it will take a little more time. There is an indescribable power or Sakti in the Name of God or Mantra. If you repeat with faith, concentration or Bhava on its meaning, i.e., the all merciful Lord is ever eager to come running to help His Bhakta. You will attain your goal quickly. Sages and saints and men of wisdom have proved this and are the examples of truth. May God grant you the strength in your noble efforts.

It is not very essential that you should allot a separate time and place for doing Japa. It can be repeated mentally at all odd hours even while engaged in daily chores. This is the great advantage we have over other spiritual Sadhana. When we repeat the Name while at work, it is not only beneficial to mind, but work is also done well.

When we meditate or do Japa we enter the inner kingdom where there is peace which passeth all under- standing. Please remember that lasting bliss is within you and if you experience any good thing, know that it is from God within and His righteousness. The Atman or God is in the innermost chambers of your heart. The mind that is at peace, quiet and still can receive, enjoy and experience the actual presence of God and this is possible through regular Japa and meditation. There is the presence, it indwells you, lives through you and envelops you. We should learn to keep the high watch of the spirit within us. Let yourself be enfolded in the conscious- ness of Light and beauty and

consistent contact with the Spirit through Japa and meditation, bring harmony, balance of mind, well-being and strength to face the problems of life. At the same time one can maintain in peace and calmness. All our problems come from believing in good and evil. There are no two powers. There is only one power-God or good. We experience the presence of God as we dwell in His thoughts. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. This is the great promise given by God in the Gita and also the basis of meditation. We find inner balance, harmony and peace when we trust in the Lord. The world has no power to make us unhappy, or lonely because no one is alone. He indwells all at all times. All of the human states come from our beliefs, from our false attitudes, from our acceptance of error rather than truth. Once we learn to overcome the world through Japa and meditation, we find a sense of well-being and a consciousness of peace, reality and truth which makes us invulnerable to all the trials and tribulations of the world. But if false beliefs, worry,

bitterness and other negative emotions fill consciousness, we should know that we are separated from God. Let us learn to listen and let the still small but powerful voice within communicate with us, speak with us and transfer our minds to an awareness of our conscious union with God. What more to say!

May Lord bless you with the best of every thing and sustained happiness.

With deep regards, Prem and Om!

GITA

My prostrations, again and again, to Lord Sri Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, the delighter of Devaki, the darling of Nandagopa, the protector of cows. My salutation to Radhapati, the source of Supreme Bliss, whose grace makes the dumb man eloquent and the cripple cross mountains.

Of all the great scriptural treasures bequeathed to the dwellers of Bharatavarsha by our ancients, there is none, with a very few exceptions, so priceless as the Bhagavat Gita. It is a song celestial and its approach rivals God Himself. I have no hesitation to say that there is not one system of ethics, religion, philosophy that does not silently take a corner in that wonderful Book. All contradictions, we apparently perceive, find in it a common meeting place and in the boundless diversity of its main structures there is an harmony as pleasing and inspiring as the colour combination in a rainbow. Perhaps the several parts and limbs of the human body do not more willingly work together, the different strings of a well tuned Veena do not more sweetly harmonise, than the greater seemingly contradictory system of Karma, Shankhya, Yoga and Bhakti in that Divine song of the Lord. And it may be added that all the rivers of the great religions of the world seem to joyously empty themselves in the ocean of the Gita. A great thinker of the West said: It is the work of the highest spiritual genius, the most deliberate and careful

constructive skill, the most earnest desire of spiritual unity. And a spirit is moving through its speculative depths that could not be found within the limits of any creed the spirit of Universal Religion.

One of the features of the Gita is that it is unique in its simplicity and unique also in its infinite variedness. It is not too high for even the infant enquirer, nor too low for the highest man of wisdom. Therefore its simplicity attracts alike the ordinary man and the highest evolved of men. But its variedness staggers the average intellect and the highest philosopher. It provides with a singularity of breath for every stage of human evolution and has something to teach every man that makes him wiser and purer.

Secondly, the Gita in its suggestiveness is profusely rather endlessly rich. It may be easy to learn and understand and at the same time very difficult to grasp the truth and practise. A person may have done Gita-Swadhyaya a score of times, even then he cannot say that he has grasped it fully. A thinker has given rea- son for this: Gita is not a treatise on philosophy nor a book of theories, but a conversation which took place several thousands of years ago between two individuals, which history has preserved for us. But it is a conversa- tion that takes place daily, rather hourly, minutely be- tween every individual and God. We are conversing with God in the true sense of the Gita, every moment of our lives and all of man's problems in life are raised in the Gita and a solution is suggested to everyone

of them. This is the reason why Gita is so perennial in its suggestions. Surely it appeals to one and all in every phase of one's life, in every mood of one's mind and as our thoughts and vagaries of the mind are innumerable, so is the Gita in its answers to the problems. We can say with emphasis that we are ever living in its presence and there is a verse for everyone of us in that Book of life.

It is most universal in its teachings but at the same time very much individual in its application and practice. We should in all sincerity learn to regulate all our actions in its abounding light and live to the best of our ability, more and more consciously in its presence; for the reason that daily Gita-Svadhyaya has been prescribed by our ancient Rishis.

ENDURING SPIRITUAL VALUES

Blessed Self! Sri Sadguru Paramatmane Namah. Om Namo Bhagavate
Vasudevaya. You might make and let loose a satellite, or for that matter, a star to roll in its orbit, and yet you have not done so memorable a thing in the eyes of God, as one who lets go a noble and divine thought to roll through generations of time! In the present day world, amidst the ruins of decaying systems of thought, we catch glimpses of new life stirring in the hearts of men and women and perhaps very soon the ruling power of thought will be better understood, which amounts to saying that our relation with the basic principle, Truth, will be perceived and acknowledged. Great indeed are the results of the subtle force extending as it does from the most trifling to the most important pursuits of life. And to the extent to which it is spiritualised does it become more cogent and more intense. Noble thoughts shed a flood of light in our lives, bringing out exalted character, purifying our intellectual powers, transforming our spiritual nature and gradually connecting them to the spirit within all that is true and beautiful. This state- ment will in no sense be found redundant, if we remember the essential fact that thoughts are constructive, the fore-runners of our deeds. Hence wrong thoughts return like boomerangs producing disunion and discord and similarly, good and noble thoughts will produce all that is good, strong and sublime,

uniting one by an invisible chain to kindred spirits who act and react on each other.

The saints and sages of yore were seers of thought and exhibited phases of spirituality and wisdom. In meditation they were dexterously effacing restlessness of their thoughts, reaching that fixity of mind in which the plane of divine consciousness is reached. Hence there is no surprise that these men of wisdom, strong in their beliefs and able to direct their range of vision to the higher and loftier planes of the spirit should, (finding their lives in the realms of the highest truth) feel their spiritual belief so strengthening and elevating. They carried conviction to their fellow men, because they believed with a belief which was not so much a faith as a certainty of absolute knowledge that the Supreme Being, the innermost in the very core of things, was felt by them in the depths of their hearts as the life of their life and the breath of their breath. When this intellect together with the mind is purified, the memory becomes firm and when the memory of the Self remains firm, then all the ties which bind us to a belief in anything but the Self are loosened. Such ideas have permeated necessarily slowly amongst men, but as spirituality increases with the help of Satsanga of the wise and conducive environment there is hope that people will become more receptive. Nevertheless, very few have the power of sinking their own personality in an ideal one, for this is the highest and rarest of gifts. You will all agree with

me when I say that in the very recent past Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, our beloved Gurudev, was one such rare gifted man of wisdom, whose lofty and sublime thoughts through his utterances and writings brought hope and solace to many people.

A sage or a man of wisdom is indeed a surest guarantee for a society's or nation's life and strength. This country has been fortunate throughout that it has produced such sages and saints all through right up to the present times. Whatever may be the present condition of a country, however helpless it may appear to be, there can be no cause for despair until its sage-producing capacity has not wholly gone from it. So, we see, this is the test for a nation's greatness has it produced any great adorable character, any sage? Many a nation has tumbled down without leaving much trace behind solely for want of spiritual strength, ever enduring spiritual values and inspiring traditions; and curiously enough this country the oldest of them all stands (which history has recorded) still young and vigorous though so old with seemingly endless capacity, if need be, to produce newer sets of saints, sages, poets, politicians, etc. The only explanation for this wonderful phenomenon is that it owns the fountain of life, the Upanishads and its perennial philosophy and also that its soil has been blessed times without number by the footprints of saints and sages. In view of this, the highest service a true son of the country can do to it, is not to re-

form it on the model of infant nations or try to revive old institutions and irrational religious dogmas, but to develop oneself to the utmost and become a grand sage in the true sense of the term. This is the highest service imaginable at this juncture, and if this were not possible the next best is to the country for the appearance of such sages and prepare saints by cleansing it of the innumerable shortcomings that now linger in and corrupt it.

Whatever may be the drawbacks and evils of our present-day society, is it not a wonder that they are so few considering the suffering we as a nation have gone through for the past many centuries. The wise and saintly law-givers of old have permanently moulded the character of our society and through their sincere efforts and fore- sight we have survived the numerous onslaughts made in the past centuries. Bad time it was, but our sages have carried us safe through them and henceforth there is no fear. How could a society or a nation die, which holds as dear not conquest and selfishness but renunciation and divinity for its ideals? And in what words could those noble sages of old be praised, who, in a world where selfishness and hatred would seem to be the order of things, had the fore sight and wisdom to choose renunciation and divinity as their ideals? The secret of success of the sages in their undertakings is that they do nothing for themselves and even doing, they do not do. The sage never thinks that he does a thing, for the 'he' no longer exists for him. He is one

with the Atman, the Self, always actionless. In his view, really, there is nothing done and much less does he crave for fruits of his actions. This is the spirit in which sages and saints do their duties. Through the sages God shines in this world. Of course God manifests Himself through all, but our selfishness and egoism suppresses that manifestation as dark clouds hide the sun, but these being absent in a sage or saint, he is God himself and whatever he does is truly the work of God. Such have been the qualities, the far- reaching and lasting results of their activities on earth.

In the very recent past, in Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, our beloved Gurudev, we have had a saint of the calibre of the old Rishi type and his whole life, as everyone is aware, was a commentary on the high ideals of selfless service and love, who by his mission in life held aloft a blazing torch of righteous-living to humanity every- where so as to dispel the darkness on the path. Further, it is said that the relief we render for the physical suffering of others is good; the help we give by intellectual knowledge so as to widen man's mental and moral nature is better, and these form but worthy preliminaries to the higher goal. But best of all is to become the spiritual pabulum (or spiritual food) by which humanity lives. The saints and sages have proved that this is the highest and noblest of services.

It is beholden on us who are left behind as the disciples of our holy Master in particular and thinking human beings in general to keep in mind the facts, the principles and lessons

indicated by our Preceptor's life and doings with a sense of gratitude in our hearts for the invaluable and lasting benefits done by him to all people everywhere. Let us all, as far as possibly can, exert our- selves to study, assimilate the teachings and make them, to the best of our ability, the working principles of our daily life. Not only this, let us all strive to carry on his noble mission of propagating spiritual knowledge for the benefit of all others through his instrument, The Divine Life Society, more intimately known as Sivanandashram.

The Divine Life Society, as all are aware, was the hub of the Master's spiritual activities from where spread and are propagated the messages of peace, love, service, goodwill and righteous living to all people. This is the in- valuable legacy left behind due to Swamiji's benign love of humanity, and it is up to us all to continue the good and noble work to the best of our ability for the good of all. This is the best service or Guru-Dakshina that we can offer at the Master's feet.

May the Lord bless you all! Jai Sri Sadguru Sivanandaji Maharaj!!

BLESSED ATMA SVAROOPA

Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya Sadguru Paramatmane Namah! Every effect has a cause is a truism. This Phenomenal Universe together with life therein is an effect and there must be a cause-which is the ultimate Truth or God. You and I are not here by chance, as we observe that the situations even on this earth have been planned meticulously in every aspect of evolution. As thinking human beings we ought to know the relationship between ourselves and the Cause or the Creator and that between us and the surrounding universe in which we are placed. All life is evolving and that is how the universe is designed.

After considerable and long evolutionary pro- cess man has sprung up, stands between animal and other lower species on one side and superman or fully evolved being or God on the other. It has been given to him the free choice either to rise up higher or fall down. According as a man acts and conducts himself so does he become. The doer of righteous actions such as: love of beings,
practice of truth, selflessness and kindly service to fellow-beings evolves towards perfection; and the doer of evil actions based on hatred, untruth, selfishness, greed, etc., falls into perdition. There is no knowing as to when we will get this precious human life again and so we cannot and

must not fritter away this life. Great is the loss for a man if he does not give thought to this and wastes away this life, the precious gift of God.

I earnestly request all aspirants to deeply ponder over this idea and make haste in earnestly treading the righteous path chalked out by the great men of wisdom to the best of our ability and with all sincere efforts.

May the Blessings of the All-Merciful Lord and the Grace of Sadgurudev be upon you all, is my sincere prayer.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

THE NATURE OF

THE GIFT INDICATES

THE NATURE OF THE GIVER

Everyone who stops to think about life, and to reflect on its nature and meaning, will be led to see that there is a Power and a Presence greater than we are. It matters not in what area of human activity and experience we wish to analyse, always there will be realisation that, while we dis- cover and interpret the Universe, each in our own way, it was there before we became aware of it. Again we may reflect and realise that, while the human condition largely seems to have been created by our own decisions, and is declared to be what it is by virtue of our own understand- ing, the Self-conscious human Phenomenon is not itself our own making, but was and is there for us to discover. The life we live is given to us. Should not the nature of the gift be indicative of the nature of the Giver, since both are one? Ponder over this idea, and you will agree that because the Giver and the gift are one, it is within our possibility of comprehension to discover something of the nature of that Power that is greater than we are, in whom we live, move and have our being.

Man is God's organ of expression. Unless we be- come aware of the central desire of our being, we shall be failing both ourselves and the Infinite One who brought us here, upon this earth. If you and I do not respond to this God-call

in our hearts, we shall be missing a great opportunity for self-growth and for co-operatively acting with the infinite. God does not force you, but He is constantly calling in your heart. If you will but listen, if you will put aside the lower desires of the outer world, this central de- mand for spiritual unfoldment will become clear. Let us be more responsive to this call. Let us know that there is nothing too good to be true and that the call of the Infinite in our hearts will inevitably be realised. The supreme ideal is God ideal.

Turn to God constantly, knowing that He will pour through you such a rich abundance of substance, of ideas, of the selfless love, of the spirit of service to others that there shall be no doubt of your ability to coin the substance of His and your inner being into wealth which will meet your every need in the outer life. The outer experience with things, activities, people and changing situations usually presents a challenge to each one of us. We have no right to complain that this is so. That is the situation which man has always faced. Because our personal and limited mentality is sometimes depressed and bewildered by the events which come hurrying towards us from the outer world, we must make our contact and realise our union with the mind of the infinite Good. Through this unity with God, we may unfailingly draw from the limitless reservoir or infinite Power.

THY WILL BE DONE-NOT MINE

Spiritual and religious functions are good opportunities provided by the Almighty to get over the human limitations and personal prejudices. Let us therefore realise that He and He alone in His Infinite Mercy works through us all for the spiritual uplift of His children and for their own purification. Brethren in Divine Life! Spirituality will for ever live in this world, whether we work to keep it alive or not; but through our endeavours to spread the Message of Divine Life, the Message of Yoga and Vedanta, the Message of devotion and aspiration, the Message of Unity and Selfless service, we shall purify our heart and realise "Thy will be done; I am nothing.' When the little 'T' dies its natural death and when the conviction becomes an immediate realisation that 'Vasudeva Sarvam', then would each one of you have bidden goodbye to the wheel of birth-and- death to which you have clung so far. If everyone of you feel the importance and the Supreme necessity to lead the Divine Life of Truth, Love and Purity, can there be a more glorious life than yours? Dear Selves! That is your mission, the mission of each one of you assembled in this function. Forget it not.

Gird up your loins and apply yourself to the glorious task. Every one of the members of The Divine Life Society, every spirituality-minded man and woman, everyone who feels that life in the spirit alone is real living, ought to take upon himself or herself the duty of educating in Divine Life, the

residents of the locality in which he or she lives. Make the people realise that real happiness lies in contentment, real peace is to be had in selfless service and righteous life; then people would gladly follow you. Much more can be achieved through proper education than the force of law. So long as the inner man is not educated, law will remain a dead letter. If the inner man is educated, then not only shall we be rendering a great service to the individual and the nation, but to the en- tire world at large. The sages of yore have chalked out different paths to suit the different tastes, to be followed and adopted by men of varied nature. Embrace spirituality with full faith and conviction. Each one of you who have assembled should lead the Divine Life of Truth, Love and Purity and help the sick, poor and needy according to your own capacity. Follow the teachings of Gurudev; Serve all. Love all. Do charity. Have purity. Control the Indriyas. Still the mind. Turn the gaze inwards. Enjoy liberation. Millions have walked this glorious path, through ages. Many have approached the Principle and gazed with wonderment at the resplendence of the Lord dwelling there. The Great religions of the world represent the songs of these Great Divine Beings who attained union with the Lord, which they sang on the way. The melody is-seems to be different; but the refrain is the same. Different colours are used by the great Master-Artists; but the picture is the same.

Yet, such is the glory of the Path that is ever new, and walking over it is ever a fresh adventure reaching the Peak today, as it has ever been, and as it ever will be, a unique achievement, great, grand and glorious!

EVERYONE IS INDEED DIVINE

To earn the epithet 'divine' an organisation or an individual should work in complete harmony with the Divine Law which is Harmony, Peace, Unity. All the miseries which the world is suffering have their origin in humanity turning away from this Path and rambling in the woods of selfishness, egoism and disunity.

Every one is indeed divine, indeed That Supreme Self (Atman) the All- Pervading Spirit of the nature of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. This nature is veiled in the majority of mankind today as a result of aeons of darkness, of ignorance. This darkness of ignorance should and can be removed by the light of Knowledge. Dissemination of this Knowledge is DIVINE LIFE.

This Knowledge can be grasped only by a pure intellect which is now laid over with a thick layer of dirt which has been accumulating there over a long period of time. Untiring selfless service rendered to every creature with Atma Bhava is the most potent weapon to clear this dirt. Selfless service, charity and Namasmarana alone are suitable to this Kali Yuga.

Everyone should embody in himself or herself the Yoga of Synthesis which our venerable Master taught and lived as a personal example for others to emulate. This Yoga is the grandest edifice ever conceived of. It harmoniously develops the head, heart and hand. It sharpens the

intellect, opens out the heart for the reception of Divine Light, develops the will, harmonises the entire personality of man in tune with the Infinite. Selfless service is the greatest force to inspire and elevate man to high levels. It brings about an all-round development of human faculties as nothing else can do. Selfless service is most essential for physical, moral and spiritual regeneration of the people of the world.

DIVINE LIFE is the approach to the Universal through the individual. All should make it a point to do some sort of selfless service, especially to the members of the backward communities by educating them and giving them free medical aid. Conduct the Nagara Sankirtans. Every member of your branch should work to propagate the aims and objects of the Society. Lead the Divine Life of Truth, Love and Purity. Then what- ever you are, you will actually feel that the Lord is ever within you and everywhere about you. Whatever you do, you will feel that you are doing everything for His sake only. Your life itself will become godly; and you would in time become one with Him.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

TENSIONS BESET MAN'S LIFE

Salutations and adorations to Lord Rama, Para Brahman, who is the basis of all that exists, who is Sat-Chit-Ananda, who cannot be comprehended or visualised by the senses, mind and the intellect and as such beyond attributes. Adorations to the Sadguru Sri Swami Sivananda who is a Jnani in the true sense of the term and who, due to his extreme compassion has given lofty and ideal spiritual messages through his sayings and writings for the benefit of people all over.

In the present-day world people are beset with problems of various kinds. Few people, if any, escape some kind of problems, and to each his problem is the most difficult. Any problem that continues over a long time can become almost overwhelming to the individual and it takes real courage and faith not to reach the so-called 'breaking point'. The tensions to which we are subjected daily seem to be increasing. The doctor, the psychologist, the practitioner, the minister knows that tensions seriously affect health and general well being. How are we to solve these!

There are two types of tensions-Internal and external. Internal tensions originate within oneself and they are not generally shared with other people because they are related to conflicts of our own and usually manifest as

'anxiety'. External tensions we share with others. Usually these are the results of environment, experiences and events affecting our families and friends, our communities and our countries. These tensions give rise to feelings of uncertainty, apprehensions or outright fear. Often we try to re- solve these by refusing to face the causes, by fighting back or by compromise.

The individual who is filled with anxiety is rarely able to look at himself objectively. He must be helped to understand himself and the cause of his problems. He must be helped to face up to life and to see the causes of his own conflicts.

Psychologists tell us that many problems resolve around the central theme of hate in its many manifestations selfishness, jealousy, prejudice, resentment, dis- honesty, etc. Sometimes the running of it as responsibility is a disguise of hostility towards one's loved ones, towards one's superiors, towards one's community. Uncontrolled emotion contributes to the production of tension in our- selves and those about us. The emotions must be directed constructively. We must develop ways of living harmoniously with other people.

SWAMI SIVANANDA'S LIFE IS

AN IDEAL EXAMPLE OF

DIVINE LIFE

It is an auspicious occasion to one and all to join together and propagate the teachings of our worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Gurudev's life is an ideal example of Divine Life. He used to say: "In the fruit Kharbuza, there are eight or ten dividing marks on the outside, but inside it is all one. In orange there is no division on the exterior, but inside there are several separate pieces. You must have real inner unity in the heart of hearts like the former fruit, but not outer showy unity like orange." Divine Life is not something other worldly or super-human way of life. Our Gurudev showed us a practical way of living with mutual feelings and understanding.

RAMA AN IDEAL OF

EVERY CONCEIVABLE QUALITY OF

GOODNESS

Sri Rama is said to be the Avatara of Lord Vishnu, intended to set an ideal before humanity, an example of perfection that man can ever reach morally, intellectually, materially and spiritually, even when living a social life in the world. There has been no sovereign at any time so noble, majestic, kind and illustrious like Rama. He set forth the ideal of discipline, law, conduct and righteousness.

Rama, the son of King Dasaratha, was an embodiment of the perfection of all virtues and an ideal of every conceivable quality of goodness. He was a repository of strength, self-restraint, fortitude, understanding, power of expression, extreme fineness of demeanour, a protector of all and saviour of Dharma, learned in all the scriptures and all the arts, dignified like the ocean, majestic like the Himalayas, a world-destroying fire in times of an- ger, and the very earth itself in forgiveness.

He showed what human perfection is and how it becomes a stepping-stone to divine perfection. He lead an exemplary life as an ideal king, ideal son, ideal brother, ideal friend, ideal husband, full of compassion for the distressed irrespective of caste or creed, and ideal in all respects.

We have to charge the cells of our personality by introducing every day a new light of divinity into our- selves and rise up to a state higher than we were the previous day and become worthy sons of God. We have to invoke the Grace of Sri Rama to attain the goal of life.

SELF-INQUIRY

The Self enquiry 'Who am I' can be made only by one in a million, says the Gita. When you throw a ball, against a wall, it bounces back with the same speed. In the same way whatever thought is arising in the mind and whatever action is performed, their reaction will be according to that action or thought only. In short, for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. This is the Law of Nature. But, a perfect Jnani or the one who is in communion with the Lord, is not bound by actions and re- actions. His Sankalpa can negate even a reaction. This is only from the cosmic point of view.

Most of our actions and the experiences shall be stored up in the subconscious level. Though the soul is untouched by actions and reactions, when it transmigrates into another body, the Sukshma Sarira will carry with it the Vasanas (impressions of thoughts and actions) of the previous incarnations. So, the soul tries to find out a suitable body to fulfil the experiences unfulfilled in the previous birth.

The modern methods of hypnosis, etc., can bring out only those matters that are on the surface mind level, and not those that are hidden in the subconscious level. For example, a man cannot remember what he has done in his second or third year, but a Jnani or a realised soul can know all his previous births also. The subject is more of the nature of one's experience rather than explanation.

Nobody is an exception to the Law of Karma and its results. Even Yogis, Self-realised saints, also have to work out their Prarabdha, i.e., that portion of Karmas of previous births which is supposed to be worked out in the present incarnation though all the rest of the Sanchita Kar- mas get fried in Nirvikalpa Samadhi and there is no more future birth for such a person.

Honesty is only a virtue and it may bring into your fold the other virtues too. But this itself is not enough to realise one's own Self. One has to put forth ceaseless efforts not to deviate from the Dharmic path, coupled with persistent Sadhana, which only can help to realise his Self.

Can a man be a worldly person as well as an ascetic? The answer will be 'yes' and 'no.' When you say yes, the instances are few. For example Raja Janaka and Meera. Though they were performing their duties outwardly, they were untouched by the results of their actions, because they were not performing their actions with an attitude of doership or agency, hence they were untouched by their results.

When we say 'no' we mean in the present world the influence of the surrounding places, one's lack of control of one's own self create less circumstances for one to be- come an ascetic. Yet, if one lives according to his or her Dharma, i.e., practising or doing one's duties as one is sup- posed to (as taught in the Gita), and does not deviate from

Dharma, one will attain Krama Mukti, i.e., gradual attainment of final liberation.

To err is human, but to correct oneself by not repeating the same, is divine. When one has grown up and attained maturity of mind, it is one's own duty to correct oneself rather than being advised or corrected by others. Even if one does not correct oneself, in due course of time oneself gets checked. It is only a matter of time. If others try to correct him, his reaction may not be favourable and sometimes it may even be worse.

There are three types of people in the world: (1) One who loves others and expects a response, (2) One who loves others only for love's sake or for duty's safe, and (3) One who does not belong to the above categories, i.e., he neither loves nor refrains from it. The example for the first category is a mother who loves the child and expects a response. (2) The teacher teaches the students just for his duty's sake and does not expect anything in re- turn, and (3) a Jivanmukta who neither loves anybody nor refrains from it. He is in the state of balanced mind. If we love others expecting a response from them then, it is purely worldly. So, we have to go beyond this weakness by developing positive introspection and self-analysis which will enable you to understand your own self rather than living in comparisons and expectations.

EVERY ACTION IS BOUND

TO HAVE A REACTION

Everybody in this world is governed by the Law of Karma which is inexorable. Every action is bound to have a reaction. If at all, we have to blame ourselves for our unpleasant experiences, which we have to face on account of our previous bad Karmas. After all man gets a human birth by God's Grace, so that he may evolve into his original state of Divinity, by learning lessons from his experiences here and developing dispassion for worldly objects and enjoyments and purify his mind and heart and become a fit receptacle for receiving Divine Grace.

One should keep cool and calm in difficulties, adversities and trying conditions of life and pray fervently from the bottom of one's heart and wait. Help is bound to come. Have firm, perfect and one-pointed faith in God. Do your duties offering the fruits to the Lord with 'Narayana Bhava' without the feeling of "I am doing; I am an enjoyer." Develop self-surrender. Once you take refuge in Him heart and soul, your welfare becomes His responsibility. Whatever comes to your lot in the natural course, you have to accept it without a murmur, as coming out of His Grace. We should not evaluate things in terms of material gains. He knows what is best for us and where and in what environment we should be placed with our evolution in view.

SELF-EFFORT AND GOD'S GRACE

Worship of God as Mother is an age long tradition in India. Mother is the sweetest of all human relations. She is the generatrix and protector. It is, therefore, quite natural to worship God as Mother.

Man's attempt to worship God and to move towards Him is religion. Life should be lived as a worship of God, and not as a material or worldly process.

Time and again, our seers and sages have been proclaiming 'You are essentially a divine being. Your earthly personality is like an overcoat which you have taken upon yourself. It is Asat, unreal. And that which is unchangeable, eternal and beginningless and endless, is your native state. That which is the essence of yourself is Sat. The essence of you is the Immortal Atman. You are the eternal spirit, unborn, deathless. Your real being is di- vine. Divinity means all-love. all-Truth, all-Auspicious- ness and Blessedness. Thus, your entire life has to be based on the consciousness of the All-Pervasiveness of the ONE Supreme Reality. Be Dharmic, whether it is Home Life, Professional Life or Vyavaharic Life. So, your character, your conduct in all your dealings in all walks of life should be based on Dharma.

Work and worship, study and service, holiness and household duties, should all go hand in hand. One's own heart should be converted into God's abode. It must be pure and God-loving. In the light of a new understanding,

you will perceive that God is all-pervading and you will love all with equal vision and serve all and share what you have with others. You have to purify your heart and make it fit for the reception of the Divine Light, by Japa, Kirtan, Svadhyaya and practice of divine virtues.

The Lord is the giver of light and the dispeller of darkness of ignorance. He is the Light of lights. He alone can dispel the darkness of ignorance that envelops the light of the Self that shines in your heart. So long as your individuality (Ahamta and Mamata) last, you cannot realise Him. So long as your ego persists, His light will not descend. You will have to first burn up your ego, if He is to reveal Himself. You should aspire for His Grace. That Grace will illumine your heart. Then He will reveal Himself to you. This is the goal. Human birth comes to one by Grace of God and you have to make your life worth living by striving hard with all earnest- ness to reach the goal, which is 'Sarva Duhkha Nivritti and Paramananda Prapti' (Free from all pains and confer- ring the Highest Happiness of the Spirit, with cessation of the cycle of birth and death).

May you all strive to attain the goal of life, and may the blessings of the Lord Almighty be ever upon you all.

Thank You